DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 193 CE 029 377

AUTHOR Farrar, Eleanor: And Others
TITLE The Walls Within: Work, Experience, and School Reform.
INSTITUTION Huron Inst., Cambridge, Mass.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Sep 80
CONTRACT 400-76-0163
NOTE 213p.: For related documents see CE 029 376-378.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC09 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Role: *Career Education: Curriculum Development: *Educational Change: Employers: Ethics: *Experiential Learning: Models: Moral Development: *Program Effectiveness: *Program Implementation: School Business Relationship: Secondary Education: Student Experience: Teacher Role: *Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Experience Based Career Education

ABSTRACT

This document reports Huron Institute's three-year implementation study (1976-80) of Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE), a high school school-and-work program developed by four regional education laboratories. Two major questions addressed by the study are: How effectively has EBCE been implemented? and What explains the differences in the effectiveness of implementation? Chapter 1 describes development of public schools in the United States, including the introduction of experiential learning and career education in the high school. Discussion of EBCE in chapter 2 focuses on the four models developed by North West Regional Laboratory, Appalachian Regional Laboratory, Far West Laboratory, and Research for Better Schools. Chapter 3 discusses EBCE as a curriculum reform that integrated academics and experience and emphasized individualization, competency-based instruction, basic skills, and remedial instruction. Barriers to integration are also considered. Chapter 4 describes some community experiences of students, including limits of the experiences, student benefits, and the employer's role. Chapter 5 considers the success of EBCE in improving the moral content of schooling. The roles of the teacher, employer, and district administrator in the school and work collaboration are discussed in chapter 6. The final chapter focuses on the successes of EBCE. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED203193

The Walls Within:

Work, Experience, and School Reform

Eleanor Farrar, John E. DeSanctis, and Peter Cowden

The Huron Institute
123 Mt. Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

September 1980

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

This study was supported by the National Institute of Education under Contract No. 400-76-0163. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Institute of Education.

CE 029 377

Acknowledgments

A study that has covered as many years and as much territory as this one inevitably is indebted to scores of people whose contribution of time and thought made the work possible. A number of people at The National Institute of Education and the four regional laboratories that developed EBCE, as well as many of our friends and colleagues, commented on the work in progress and their ideas have become woven into the fabric of our thought and prose in ways that defy attribution and due credit. We are enormously grateful for their help.

Our project officer at The National Institute of Education, David Goodwin, was particularly supportive and insightful at several critical junctures over the past four years. Also at the NIE, Lois-ellin Datta, Ron Bucknam, Lana Muraskin, and Mary Ann Millsap provided assistance of various kinds and gave us their recollections of the program's early history. When meetings were convened to discuss the work, we found the participants' commentaries immensely helpful. Our thanks are due to Dick Elmore, Dan Lortie, Lou Smith, Carl Van Horn, Bob Nokamura, Paul Pohland, Mark Tucker, and Bob Schwartz. And a special thanks goes to those with whom we have talked about this work at length over several years: Jerry Murphy, Marvin Lazarson, Henry Acland, and Matt Miles. We are particularly indebted to David K. Cohen, whose influence both as a former teacher and as a colleague can be found on many pages throughout the report.

Without the help of staff at the four education laboratories that developed EBCE, it is difficult to imagine how this work could have been accomplished. They accommodated many, many requests from us over the past four years, and they were invariably candid and forthcoming. Our thanks go to the EBCE staff, and especially to Bob Peterson and George Rusteika at Far West Regional Laboratory, Lou Maguire and Michaelita Quinn at Research for Better Schools, Rex Hagens and Tom Owens at Northwest Regional Laboratory, and Harold Henderson and Jack Sanders at Appalachian Educational Laboratory. And last, but only because everyone cannot be thanked at once, we would like to acknowledge the help, patience, and forthrightness of the hundreds of people with whom we met in state agencies and local school districts around the country. School administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community representatives spent thousands of hours sharing with us their experiences, opinions, and beliefs. We were reminded once again, as we have been so many times in the past, that the people who work with teenagers are committed to teaching and care about the next generation to a degree that is seldom recognized or acknowledged.

The final preparation of this manuscript was painstakingly orchestrated by our editor, Maria Sachs, and our project assistant, Lori Dolloff. Our respect for their competence is matched only by our regard for their patience and good humor.

Contents

INTRODUCTION i

I THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES 1

Evolving School Structure 4

Early Reforms 5
Effect of Reforms on School Structure 11

Development of the High School 11

Academic Versus Experiential Learning in the High School 14

The Shift Toward an Experiential Curriculum 14
Effects on Curriculum and School Structure 20

Career Education 22

Notes 24

II EXPERIENCE-BASED CAREER EDUCATION 25

Experience-Based Career Education 28

The Program's Development 28
The Four Models of EBCE 30

EBCE Implementation in School Districts 35

Notes 38

III SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM REFORM 41

Integrating Academics and Experience 43

Individual Instruction 49
Competence-Based Education 53
Basic Skills and Remedial Instruction 58

School Structure and Curriculum Reform 62

Departmentalization of the Curriculum 63
Professional Specialization 67
Student Credentialing 70

Conclusion 73

Notes 76

IV STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN THE COMMUNITY 79

Some Limits of Work Experience 79

Students' Uses of the School-and-Work Program 84

Escape from School 85
Pursuit of Personal Interests 85
Planning for the Future 86
Employment Agency 87
A Haven 88

The Participation of Employers in EBCE 89

Conclusions 98

Notes 100

V EBCE AS A MORAL CURRICULUM 103

Freedom as a Learning Responsibility 104

The EBCE Staff 110

Community Adults 113

EBCE and the Youth Culture 118

Conclusions 121

Notes 123

IV THE SCHOOL AND WORK COLLABORATION: LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AND CREATIVE USE 125

Functions and Responsibilities of District Administrators 127

Managing Students 128
Relations Between School and Community 134
Managing Federal and State Requirement 143
Declining Budgets and Enrollments 145
Summary 148

Teachers in the Community 149

The Employer Working with Schools 158

Conclusion 164

Notes 167

VII CONCLUSION: VARIETIES OF SUCCESS 171

Timeliness of Career Education 174

EBCE as a Solution to Problems Old and New 176

Managing Students 177
Relations Between School and Community 178
Managing Federal and State Requirements 179
Attracting State and Federal Funds 180

Conclusion 181

Notes 192

APPENDIX A: THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY 193

INTRODUCTION

An Overview of the Study

In October 1976, The National Institute of Education contracted with The Huron Institute to conduct a three-year implementation study of Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE), a high school school-and-work program that was developed by four regional education laboratories under the auspices of the NIE. The NIE's request for proposals for the study set forth two major questions the study was to address:

* How effectively has EBCE been implemented?
* What explains the differences in the effectiveness of implementation?

In response, The Huron Institute outlined a study that would consider these questions in terms of three definitions of effectiveness in implementation:

* The faithful replication of program plans, blueprints, and goals (fidelity);
* The carrying out of a modified program involving changes in both program design and school district procedures to ensure the program's persistence (mutual adaptation);
* The views of local program participants in school districts.

Assessments of implementation effectiveness perforce rest on some frame of reference or criteria by which to judge it. In the view that effective implementation is replication, the criterion is straightforward: the faithful installation of program plans, blueprints, and procedures. When the "mutual adaptation" model is applied, effectiveness is still weighed in terms of program plans and goals; but some modification in blueprints and procedures is acceptable in order to encourage the program's persistence.

Here persistence of an adaptation of the original program, in a district which has itself adapted to ensure persistence, is the criterion for assaying the effectiveness of implementation.

Fidelity and mutual adaptation are the chief models which have guided most research on program implementation. But there were no firm theoretical models to guide implementation research from the local district perspective. In proposing to study implementation from this perspective, we suggested that effectiveness would be judged in many different ways, varying with local context, roles, aspirations and hopes for the reform, and experience with it. There would also be temporal considerations: people's perceptions and expectations of EBCE were likely to change over time. Thus research on implementation effectiveness in any one site might reveal many different attitudes and ways of interpreting the innovation, which would be reflected in judgments about its successes. We thus anticipated no single definitive conclusion about effectiveness in local terms. Rather there would be many views, each as plausible as the others, and all as legitimate for assaying implementation as views from the fidelity or mutual adaptation approaches.

In suggesting research from the local perspective, Huron laid the groundwork for a new conception of the implementation process, more complex than the models of implementation as program replication and as mutual adaption. Huron's multilateral local angle on the implementation process formed the conceptual framework for the study.[1] Briefly summarized, this framework suggests that the implementation of multidimensional education reform programs such as EBCE, which are non-categorical, is best thought of

---

[1] Views from Below: Implementation Research in Education, Farrar, DeSanctis, and Cohen, The Huron Institute, April 1979; forthcoming, Teachers College Record, October 1980.

as a multilateral, evolutionary process. By this we mean that because central or federal authority in such programs is weak and can exercise little control, and because the multiple goals of the program are for the most part loosely defined, local influences on the program dominate in implementation. They are more powerful than central hopes and formal goals.

We suggested evolution as the metaphor to describe the implementation of such programs because local forces acting on the program vary enormously and so produce many different program improvisations and interpretations, all departing in some measure from the formal federal blueprint. Even within programs there is variation as people interpret and influence the program in different ways. Instead of acting with one mind and a common understanding of the formal plans and goals, people implement their unique visions of the program. And as these visions change over time, the program evolves in yet other ways.

This approach draws on the work of Giandomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky, who question whether it makes sense to consider federal policies or predeveloped programs independently of efforts to put them into practice (the "dualistic fallacy").[2] Majone and Wildavsky argue that "attainment of a goal is a unitary process or procedure, not a double process of setting the goal and then devising an implementation plan."[3] Neither is implementation simply the unanchored process of goal discovery, in which whatever occurs is what one wanted to occur. Rather it is an effort to develop the "capacities,

---

[2]This notion is more fully developed in Views from Below: Implementation Research in Education, op. cit. See also Majone & Wildavsky, "Implementation as Evolution: Exorcising the Ghosts from the Implementation Machine," Russell Sage Discussion Papers, No. 2, 1978.

[3]Op. cit., Majone & Wildavsky

potentialities, and other dispositional qualities of a policy idea."[4] Taken together, these notions suggest that the implementation of a policy idea will vary, both because not all of the idea's many potentialities will be seen, and because any given idea will be interpreted differently in different settings.

As the research on EBCE got under way, it quickly became apparent that evolution and improvisation were not confined to local districts. The ideas, practices, and materials of the developers also changed over time. Moreover, ideas and practices varied within a given developer's staff: for example, some who provided technical assistance favored some forms, while others favored other forms. As developers worked with school districts implementing the reform, they continually modified and improved their training and technical assistance programs, revised EBCE materials to accommodate to local needs, and altered their definitions of effective implementation to incorporate many local program variations. Indeed, when the program was adopted for special student populations or modified so as to be eligible for targeted federal monies, this often took place with lab assistance--reflecting an evolution in the developers' original conceptions of the program and the ways in which it could be implemented. These changes did not occur in a regular and systematic way among developers any more than improvisations were premeditated by local participants. Changes were generally based on what worked best, and that was often stumbled upon rather than neatly planned. Experience with the innovation informed the developers' ideas as much as it did those of practitioners.

Thus, variation and change were dominant themes in EBCE's implementation.

---

[4] Op. cit., Majone & Wildavsky.

Improvisation and evolution marked implementation at all levels--the local level as well as that of developers, and among federal officials with oversight responsibilities for EBCE, whose ideas evolved as they received feedback from those two groups. And, of course, the research has been evolutionary as well, as certain themes emerged more clearly and new themes appeared.

The evolutionary character of implementation necessarily affected the criteria for assessing it. If fidelity was key, fidelity to what stage of the program as it evolved in the developers' thinking? Mutual adaptation seemed an equally amorphous guide to the research, because of the wide range of adaptations made within and among developers' staffs and local programs. The criteria for studying implementation effectiveness thus became unanchored in terms of these two perspectives, just as they had always varied from the local perspective.

This presented a dilemma for reporting on the effectiveness of EBCE's implementation and explaining differences in effectiveness. Huron indicated that the two questions posed by the RFP were not entirely separable. To some degree, discussion of both questions would turn on the same criteria, and efforts to respond to one question would inevitably produce information on the other. In using local views as a frame of reference, we expected enormous variation in the answers to the question of effectiveness, and thus the same variation in explaining the differences. Nonetheless, since federal influence on local events is exerted chiefly through such external incentives as staff training, technical assistance, and funding, it seemed particularly important to consider their role in explaining differences in implementation effectiveness.

Assessing effectiveness and explaining influences other than those amenable to federal control still remained a problem. One solution was simply to document events but that seemed inadequate since Huron was asked to offer some assessment of what occurred. Documentation would report events in local districts, but assessments of implementation effectiveness perforce required that there be criteria for weighing effectiveness. Whose criteria should prevail? Was one frame of reference more legitimate than any other?

In our view, the appropriate frame of reference is one that is broader than the others and in part subsumes them: the education policy climate, and the climate of opinion about the problems of high schools and what could be done about them, that gave birth to the career education movement, and in particular that led to the development of EBCE. We explore this in greater depth in this report, but here is a quick overview:

> In the decade which preceded the launching of EBCE as a research and development effort, there was a growing chorus of complaint about what was ailing American secondary education: the schools were isolated from "real life"; much of what they taught was irrelevant to students' future lives; schools were rigid and bureaucratic, unresponsive to the needs of youth and unwilling to provide them with opportunities to learn responsibility, initiative, and the appropriate behavior for successful life and work. A raft of proposals was advanced to remedy these problems, and many of them converged on the world of work. A substantial collection of national commission reports, privately funded studies and opinion polls recommended that youth be let out of school to learn about the world of work, to acquire through contact with working adults role models of successful adult behavior to learn through first hand experience how formal academic learning was relevant to life after school. This climate of opinion about the inadequacies of high school education and the proposals for solving them provided the intellectual rationale for the career education movement and for Experience-Based Career Education.

In studying the implementation of EBCE, then, in a context marked by constant revision, adaptation, improvisation, and change within and among all levels of the enterprise, the intentions and potentialities of the policy idea which spawned EBCE provided the most powerful point of reference for this study.

This approach to the study of implementation is novel; it eschews the usual criteria and points of reference for implementation research. It denies us the luxury of a clear and unified assessment of effectiveness valid across the many program variants evolved by local districts. But if we concede the great importance of local influences on any reform program, the approach permits a more complex analysis of effectiveness and of the factors which influence it. Assessing implementation in terms of policy "intentions" or "predispositions" lets many different local stories of EBCE emerge. Some of these stories tell of successes and others of failures; but in this view, all of the stories can be told for a much richer portrayal of the program in its policy context.

The Products of the Study

This report is one of several which have been prepared by The Huron Institute on the implementation of Experience-Based Career Education. Other reports in the series include:

"The Implementation of Experience-Based Career Education: Program Characteristics," John DeSanctis and Peter Cowden, The Huron Institute, October, 1977.

"The Implementation of Experience-Based Career Education: Characteristics of Community Resources and Student Work Experiences," The Huron Institute, October, 1977.

"The Implementation of Experience-Based Career Education: Characteristics of Adopting Communities," The Huron Institute, October, 1977.

"Alternative Conceptions of Implementation," Eleanor Farrar, John E. DeSanctis, David K. Cohen, The Huron Institute, October 1978.

"The Implementation of Experience-Based Career Education: A Survey of Programs and Populations," Susan Stix and David K. Cohen, The Huron Institute, October, 1978.

"The Impact of Experience-Based Career Education on the Organization and Process of Schooling," Eleanor Farrar, The Huron Institute, November, 1978.

"Views from Below: Implementation Research in Education," Eleanor Farrar, John E. DeSanctis, David K. Cohen, The Huron Institute, April, 1979. (Forthcoming, Teachers College Record, Fall 1980.)

"Influences and Effects: The Implementation and Institutionalization of Experience-Based Career Education," John E. DeSanctis, The Huron Institute, August, 1980.

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

Americans have a deep faith in public schooling, both as preparing youth for life and as protecting youth from it. Support for the common school movement was based on arguments of many persuasions, but the common theme was that traditional institutions--the family, church, and community--could no longer prepare youth for adulthood. Life had become too complex for learning in the old informal ways, and the apprenticeship system was rapidly failing. If industrialism, social mobility, and immigration threatened youth's transition to adulthood, schools were the answer. They would teach proper values, instill discipline, transmit a common culture, and prepare youth for work. Many believed that society's future depended on a system of universal free education to equip all youth for productive life and democratic participation.

At the same time, schools were viewed as necessary to protect youth from life. If children were threatened by the evils of industrialism and secular life, schools would save them from child labor and promote the moral values needed to resist the temptations of the adult world.

But if there was consensus on the need for schools as the best preparation for life, the society was deeply ambivalent about the best way of achieving it. This ambivalence revolves around the value of intellectual study versus learning from real experience and has influenced both the structure and organization of American schools and their curriculum. On one hand, experience was favored as the best form of instruction and the best preparation for adult life. In line with society's democratic and egalitarian principles, an idealized view of the common man held that prac-

tical skills and common sense were the most important requisites for economic success and democratic participation. Rather than intellectual training or family background, the proven, applauded routes to individual accomplishment in the United States were hard work and sound intuition. From early colonial times, excessive intellectual activity had been associated with the unearned privilege and unquestioned authority common to European societies and their traditional churches, and so was suspect: it threatened democratic principles because it would recreate European inequalities; those with too much book learning would acquire unequal influence, to the disadvantage of ordinary men and the public welfare. Thus, intellectual or academic study was synonymous with the evils of aristocracy and high Christianity, challenged the equality of common men and their opinions, and in addition seemed of little benefit in the practical affairs of life.

On the other hand, intellectual training was viewed in a positive light. It was the source of power to act both for personal advantage and for the good of society. Formal study developed one's ability to reason, to discriminate, to resist the easy influence of others, and as such was thought indispensable for the survival of a truly democratic form of government. Thus, academic study could not be discounted. Taken in small doses, it was essential for the good of the individual as well as the larger society.

The upshot of this ambivalence was that academic study was both admired and feared, envied and disdained. The present school organization strikingly mirrors that ambivalence. Our schools incorporate the notion that real experience--which occurs out of schools--is more important than formal learning--which occurs in them. Yet all agreed that youth belonged in

school; and so schools imported experience in the form of vocational training, life adjustment education, and, later, a raft of experiential courses in such things as home economics, driver's education, and personal hygiene, which now comprise a considerable part of the curriculum, and the structure, of schools. Yet at the same time, our schools incorporate the assumption that academic study is better than experience; math, the sciences, and other traditional disciplines also form a substantial part of the organization. As a result, there is an inherent tension in the enterprise.

The concept of experiential education in school is in itself a paradox. Partly in response to the efforts of those who championed experience in the schools, schools have tried to provide that experience. But because they are walled off from the community where real experience occurs, they must provide it within the framework of a formal organization. Thus, much of what the schools have done with experience has been to organize it in the setting and terms of formal schooling. Since trades could not be learned in the workplace because youth belonged in schools, they would be offered in simulated settings, with textbooks, assignments and tests. Home economics could not be learned by managing a household of four, so it would be provided in classroom kitchens by teachers who selected the recipes and purchased the necessary provisions. The paradox is contained in this arrangement. How can experience be translated into formal learning? How can formal learning capture the essence of experience through the vehicle of classrooms, teachers, and books? Real experience, after all, does not occur in classrooms; it takes place in its natural setting, in the workplace or the home where the life, the ambiance, the activities of experience occur spontaneously and in close interaction with the conditions and other activities of that setting.

Thus, while schools are intellectually and culturally vulnerable to the ideology of experience and have attempted to simulate it, they are socially and politically vulnerable to efforts to provide experience outside schools, in the community.

Career education and other recent work-and-school reforms have tried to resolve the paradox. They have tried to take experience out of schools and return it to the workplace where it occurs naturally. But the walls that were built to protect youth from real experience are a barrier. Laws, professionalism, and tradition complicate the schools' recent efforts to reform secondary education by letting youth out into the community to learn about work by doing it.

Evolving School Structure

The role of schools as protecting youth from the potentially dangerous and destructive life in the community contributed much to the character and structure of the organization that began to evolve. Schools began to differentiate themselves from the community, which seemed necessary if they were to instruct young people in the correct moral values and social behavior that seemed to be fading rapidly from the American social landscape. This differentiation gave rise to an institution that was isolated from community life and that would, over time, become increasingly resistant to outside influence and control. In protecting youth from adults--and working adults from the threat of youth labor--the schools in turn were protected from society by an increasingly elaborate complex of laws, regulations, and certification requirements. These not only governed the terms of student attendance, participation, and graduation, but also the terms under which adults might participate as teachers. Reforms designed to protect youth

and ensure the quality of their education had the effect of building a wall around schools, separating them more and more from life in the community outside. Schools became protected and protective enclaves; they would prepare youth for responsible adulthood and productive work in a safe environment, removed from modern life and the workplace. Paradoxically, learning in an ideal community would prepare youth for life outside.

Early Reforms

The differentiation of schools from community life was fueled by reformers' efforts to address a litany of complaints about the failure of public schools. Most of these concerned the poor quality of instruction and chaotic conditions. Massachusetts had led the nation in developing the common school system, yet in 1826, the educational reformer James Gordon Carter warned that if state policies did not change, common schools would be extinct within twenty years.[1] During his tenure as secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1837, Horace Mann complained that schoolhouses were too small and ill-situated; that penny-pinching school committees neglected to insure uniformity in textbooks, so that eight or ten different manuals on the same subject were used in the same class; that there was an extensive lack of competent teachers, though the existing teachers were "as good as public opinion demanded"; that there was "an obvious want of intelligence in the reading classes," and that "more than eleven-twelfths of all children in the reading classes . . . do not understand the meaning of the words they read."[2] In 1870, at the brink of the great surge in secondary education, future National Education Association President William Franklin Phelps, then head of a normal school in Minnesota, declared:

> [The elementary schools] are mainly in the hands of ignorant, unskilled teachers. The children are fed upon the mere husks of knowledge. They leave school for the broad theater of life without discipline; without mental power or moral stamina . . . . Poor schools and poor teachers are in the majority throughout the country. Multitudes of the schools are so poor that it would be well for the country if they were closed . . . : They afford the sad spectacle of ignorance engaged in the stupendous fraud of self-perpetuation at the public expense . . . . Hundreds of our American schools are little less than undisciplined juvenile mobs.[3]

Complaints of this sort about the dismal conditions and achievements of public schooling prompted a variety of educational reforms that helped to establish the structure and organization of American schools. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, educators were intent upon instituting a system of free education for all children. But once the common school movement had taken hold and schools were accepted as the chief agency for educating youth, attention shifted to the need to organize and manage the system for effective teaching and moral training. Arguments raged about the best methods for instilling moral virtues and literacy skills, but at this time curriculum content was not an issue. It was strictly concerned with basic skills, while preparation for work took place at home or in formal apprenticeships. But even within this limited range of responsibility, educators believed that schools could be arranged so as to fulfill their mandate more efficiently and with better results. Thus, the first school improvement reforms were largely concerned with school structure and organization. They were intended to ensure student progress and achievement by introducing uniformity and sequence to the curriculum, by easing the management of large numbers of students, and by improving the quality of teachers.

Uniformity. As early as 1838, Henry Barnard had urged the "efficient classification of students" to improve the quality of instruction, and by

1870, graded classrooms were the norm in all but rural schoolhouses across the country. This set the stage for introducing a uniform course of study to each classroom.[4] In 1862, William Harvey Wells, the superintendent of schools in Chicago, published "A Graded Course of Instructions to Teachers," which not only outlined specific items to be covered in each subject at each grade level, but also prescribed the proper teaching methods. The book became a bestseller in the Midwestern schools, and was quickly followed by similar texts prepared for East Coast consumption.

The introduction of a standard curriculum led to questions about whether students were being thoroughly drilled in the prescribed material, and written examinations to measure student achievement were duly introduced. The results of the first system-wide testing effort in Portland, Oregon, in 1870 were not encouraging--in seven classes out of the twenty-one, none of the children passed the test--but the undaunted superintendent announced the operation a great success. Written examinations quickly became a permanent fixture in American education.

Standardization spread quickly. It was consistent with both democratic ideals and the developing ethos of social organization largely derived from modern business. The new industrial ideas of institutional order and economic efficiency resonated thoroughly with American consiousness and social habits. And many educators believed that if schools could replicate the division of labor and specialization by task found in factories, effective and efficient education was bound to result. The development of a school system organized to deliver education as a mass production commodity thus became the central goal of school reformers. Few questioned what the schools taught, and attention was riveted on organizing the institution for

teaching.

Management of student population. But it was more than the currency of ideas about bureaucratic organization that made them appealing to schoolpeople. The internal differentiation of factories provided a model for dealing with a rapidly expanding population in schools. Between 1820 and 1860, American cities and towns were undergoing the most rapid rate of urbanization in the country's history. While the total population increased by about one third during each decade, the population in towns of 2,500 increased almost three times as fast.[5] In a single year, 1847, the population of Boston increased by nearly 30% with the arrival of 30,000 Irish immigrants, and Chicago, which was a small town in 1830, had grown to a city of over 100,000 by 1860. Schools were overwhelmed by this influx, since many were still one-room schoolhouses. It was not unusual for a single teacher to be responsible for instructing a hundred students in an urban classroom at that time, and as critics pointed out, little real instruction could occur under such conditions. The division of students into manageable groups based on age or achievement thus was not only a familiar and compatible form in an increasingly urban and industrialized society; it also responded to pressing internal problems of sheer numbers and lack of organization. People believed that children belonged in schools, but the old system could not accomodate them. Little wonder that the paramount concern of educators and reformers was the organization and management of the enterprise, protected from strong community pressures to influence and control.

Professionalizing the teaching role. Once uniformity had been introduced to the organization of classrooms, it quickly spread to other dimen-

sions of school life. Curricular and textbook standardization seemed to follow naturally from the sequential grading of students, but many of the arguments for it rested on the dismal quality of public school instruction. For years teachers had been recruited from the ranks of the socially misfit or occupationally unfit. Often they had little formal education beyond grammar school and few personal attributes to recommend them as agents for the moral instruction of youth. When women were accepted into the profession, the quality of teaching was thought to improve, since they frequently had more years of formal schooling and a greater concern for moral virtues and deportment. But the lack of competent teachers remained a serious problem until well into the twentieth century. The normal school movement, initiated by Horace Mann in 1839 to produce a corps of able teachers, did not pick up steam until after the Civil War. Even then, admission standards were haphazard--two years of secondary schooling was the usual prerequisite for two years of normal school study--and students dropped out in large numbers.

Efforts to enforce a minimum standard of teacher preparation began with the introduction of licensing examinations. But mandatory certification based on minimum training and specialized preparation became the rule only when schools began to absorb some functions of various public and private social service agencies and to develop diverse programs for students with "special" needs. In 1900, only two states required specialized credentials. But within twenty years, nearly all states had elaborate laws certifying educators by level or grade of instruction, and by function or subject taught.[6] Teaching was no longer a job of last resort nor was it for the

average person.

In the years that followed, teachers and their associations became formal interest groups: they grew in size and influence, admitted only those properly trained and certified, and worked diligently to develop and maintain their professional prerogatives. The professionalization of educators was spurred by large numbers of visibly ill-qualified instructors who reflected poorly on the job and schools and who discouraged more able people from applying; it also expressed the view that schooling was too important to be placed in the hands of amateurs. Schools were the designated guardians of youth; the future well-begin of society demanded that youth be trained by people of unusual competence and skill. Ordinary people possessed neither the moral qualities nor the intellectual training required for good teaching, and educators successfully argued that teachers--like physicians, lawyers, and others on whose expertise the public welfare depended--must be carefully trained and certified to shape the minds and morals of the young. The public was not considered competent to make such judgments about its children's teachers; the task fell to experts who set the standards and watched over the schools.

The successful effort to elevate schoolkeeping to professional status was due to more than the sudden interest in professionalism at that time; it reflected the growing importance of education in the society and a faith in the role of public schools. It improved the status of the teaching force and perhaps its quality, as well as job security. But it also formed one more tier in the wall that separated schools from society, life, and ordinary people. Like other elements in the bureaucratization of schools,

the professionalization of teaching later became a barrier to letting youth learn out of schools.

Effect of Reforms on School Structure

By the last decades of the nineteenth century, the framework of a school system characterized by hierarchy, uniformity, specialization of instruction, and standardized curricula had been established. The resulting form and structure of schools produced little serious dissent because reformers agreed with the values it expressed and the lessons it encouraged. Through an elaborate system of grade stratification, fixed curricula, examinations, and rules of deportment, children learned the value of obedience, regularity, and precision: they learned the moral curriculum. In many respects, the formal school curriculum became the primary instrument for teaching the appropriate behavior for life. While this formerly had been learned as a by-product of life in homes, communities, and churches, the pre-eminent role of schools now expressed the belief that it could only be learned in classrooms. Responsibility for preparing youth for life had shifted from ordinary adults and traditional institutions to schools increasingly isolated from both, which were organized to provide uniform instruction and moral training under the supervision of qualified professionals. Learning from real experience in the community had been superseded by preparing for life in schools.

Development of the High School

During the reform era that followed the Civil War, the attention of educationalists turned to the extension of public education to both older and younger children. The high school, and to a lesser extent the kinder-

garten, became integral parts of the common school system. The first public high school was established in Boston in 1821, but more than half a century passed before free secondary education was accepted by all states. The arguments pro and con were fervent and bitter: opponents claimed that secondary education was elitist, primarily intended for those who would go on to college. They believed that taxpayers should not be responsible for exacerbating the social class differences that academic study was bound to encourage.[7] But the proponents' arguments proved more convincing: universal secondary schooling would end inequalities by providing all children with the advantages of more education. It would train the poor and advantaged alike to be useful and productive members of society. It would prepare all for the complexities of modern life.

The development of public high schools precipitated the first serious challenge to the traditional school curriculum, and brought to the surface the nation's deep ambivalence about the value of academic study and moral training versus learning from real experience. Some continued to support academic study as the best vehicle for self-improvement, preserving democratic ideals and avoiding the social stratification that vocational training would introduce. But increasingly, ideas which sought to balance intellectual training with training in work-related skills took hold. Many believed that most students had neither the need nor the aptitude for academic study and insisted that the central purpose of education was preparation for productive labor. Doubts about continuing the academic curriculum at the high school level were related to familiar issues: growing industrialization, immigration, and the movement from farms to cities. Reformers held that

mobility and technology had destroyed the old avenues for occupational training, and that high schools must assume the task of preparing youth for work.

But through all the discussions, schools continued to be seen as the agencies for forming and reforming youth, institutions that would assume the roles of failing traditional groups and repair the damage caused by modernization. The belief persisted that youth belonged in school--a belief many young people did not share. Before 1900, only a fraction of the eligible students attended any academy of higher education, and even fewer completed their studies. In 1870, only 16,000 graduated from either public or private high schools--2% of the population aged seventeen. Undaunted by the opposition of industrialists who wanted to hire youth and of youth who wanted to work, the Progressives, labor groups, and schoolpeople urgently pressed the need for compulsory schooling. By 1890, twenty-seven states compelled attendance, and by 1918, when all states had such laws, the school-leaving age was fixed close to the figure that still stands--a mean age of sixteen years and three months.[8] Youth was now separated from "real life" by law for well into the teenage years.

The transformation of the high school into a mass institution dramatically altered its character. Previously, the high school had been small and select, attended primarily by students who wanted to be there and whose families could forego the lost income. But with the extension of compulsory schooling, pupils were not merely selected; they were often constrained. If high school had once been a safe haven and a rare opportunity, it was now an institution whose captives were often ill-prepared for traditional study and ill-disposed to more years of formal schooling. Increasingly the high

schools became overseers of a very different and largely reluctant group of students, and the schools began to think of ways to hold them.

Academic Versus Experiential Learning in the High School

Compulsory attendance heated the debates about the high school curriculum, which were heavily laced with arguments about the holding power of a more practical education. Some insisted that the single academic curriculum encouraged dropping out and poor attendance: it could not satisfy all needs. Some students learned better by doing; others simply preferred working life, where demand for labor far exceeded supply. And the lax enforcement of attendance laws further encouraged students to work. But while it seemed that many students would rather work in the community than in the classroom, few adults agreed with them. If students preferred real life to school, it seemed better to bring programs that simulated life into schools than to let students experience the real thing. In 1893 the NEA's Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies reaffirmed the value of traditional study for all, excluding a role for more practical or occupation-oriented studies in the curriculum.

This decision, however, did not turn back the tide of experiential learning. Based on a common belief that experiential programs would deter drop-outs and prepare youth for life better than the traditional curriculum, schools reinforced their efforts to eliminate truancy, and began to develop courses first in manual training and then in vocational education and life adjustment--a definite drift away from traditional schooling.

The Shift Toward an Experiential Curriculum

With the introduction of manual training to public schools in the late

1870s, the trend toward experiential education picked up steam and began to appear in various forms: vocational education, Progressive education, life adjustment education, and most recently, the career education movement. With each wave of experiential reform, the new educators attacked the previous one--along with the traditional curriculum--as unsuitable, ineffective, undemocratic, and inadequate for most of the youngsters in high school. They advocated a new experiential curriculum for most of the old reasons: it would prepare youth for modern life, provide better motivation for academic study, advance the moral lessons of school, and promote the democratic ideals of education. But for nearly 100 years after experience was first introduced to the curriculum, educators continued to believe that experience should take place in schools. Thus, while some ideas about education had shifted, the idea that schools could best prepare youth for life remained strong.

Manual training. The first stab at a curriculum based on experience was manual training--a movement that was short-lived but nonetheless notable, both for breaking the monopoly of the traditional school curriculum and for promoting a pedagogy novel to American education. The aim of manual training was to supplement the basic curriculum with hand work, in metal or wood, for example, that would "educate the mind through the hand." Advocates of manual training laid claim to the same arguments that were advanced for traditional study--that it would teach the value of precision, logic, and diligence, and in addition would help hold students who otherwise would drop out of school. Some thought manual training would be particularly useful for less able children who seemed not to learn much from books, and

others thought it would work well as a moral curriculum, teaching slum children about the value of work and inculcating the "work ethic." Thus, while it was not specifically vocational in intent, manual training clearly had vocational implications. The manual training movement lasted barely twenty years, partly because it was too vocational and partly because it wasn't vocational enough: traditionalists opposed it for its anti-intellectual leanings, and reformers argued that it wasn't practical enough. It failed because it was too centrist. But the movement was important for introducing experience to the curriculum and for legitimizing the teaching of work-related skills in school. Its themes were picked up by two very different reform groups--the vocationalists and the Progressives--who emphasized different aspects of the movement but who had one thing in common: both believed that experiential education was more effective and would better prepare youth for life.

Vocational education. Both the Progressive movement and vocational education had a major impact on American education, but the vocationalists were the first to take the nation's schools by storm. While the Progressives labored to devise a theory in which to ground their ideas about experiential learning, vocational educators picked up the theme of utility in education for work, which had an immediacy and practicality that appealed to those concerned with the inadequacy of education and the remedy for it. For very different reasons, interest groups usually at odds found in vocationalism a solution to their concerns about preparing and training youth. Manufacturers' organizations believed that vocational training would relieve industry of that expensive task and would produce a work force acquainted with the de-

mands of industrial life. Labor groups fought about whether vocationalism would socialize youngsters for dead-end jobs or prepare them for upward mobility, but finally agreed that it would improve their life chances. And many educators, struggling to deal with a rapidly swelling and increasingly diverse student population, argued that vocational training was the best preparation for those ill-suited for academic study.

Vocational education provoked considerable argument and struggle before it was accepted as a permanent part of the high school curriculum; but accord was possible because its lofty rhetoric was familiar. It did not differ from the old arguments on behalf of traditional education: vocational education would promote moral and spiritual development and prepare youth for responsible adult work, family roles, and democratic participation. Moreover, the failure of high schools to hold and educate many teenagers did not provoke questions about the wisdom of extended schooling or the need for alternatives to school; if academic study was inadequate because some learned better by doing, then experiential learning must be brought into schools. After the turn of the century, few questioned the belief that youth belonged in school and that early school leaving was disadvantageous to both youth and society. With the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, the institutionalization of vocational curricula in the schools was assured, and conflict subsided at the national level.

The introduction of vocationalism was a victory for experiential educators. Vocationalism not only legitimized the role of experience in the schools, but also expanded the responsibilities of schools--first for job preparation and then for counseling students into jobs suited to their abil-

ities and aptitudes. The schools' assumption of that task--which formerly had occurred in the community--marked a definite shift in ideas about the purposes of schooling. Schools were intended to prepare youth for life, but increasingly, life was defined in terms of productive work.

John Dewey and the Progressives. The Progressives were in agreement with vocationalists and traditionalists who believed that the community no longer prepared youth for life, that the schools did not do much better, and that the failure of schools to educate, socialize, and retain youth was due to their single-minded devotion to book learning. But the Progressives took the issue a step further. They argued that in addition to its medieval conception of learning, school was fundamentally flawed by its misguided premise about the nature of society. John Dewey proposed to develop a school curriculum that was experience-based and to restructure the school by creating within it a model of the community outside. While this vision involved a complete revamping of the education delivery system, it continued on the theme that the best preparation for life occurred in schools. Instead of eliminating the separation of the community from school, Dewey proposed to recreate the community in the school.

Dewey's community-within-the-school relied primarily on an experiential pedagogy and a curriculum that revolved around work. Like the earlier manual training educators, Dewey believed that the mind was best trained through the hand. But lest students simply develop their skills rather than their reason, he proposed that their experiences be closely linked to trades or occupations that required continual thought and planning. With their powers of reflection thus stimulated, students would begin to ponder deeper

questions beyond the domain of work--questions about the history of science, for example--and an interest in academic study would ensue. Unlike learning by rote and examination under the direction of teachers enforcing a strict code of discipline, the simulation of work in school would awaken the intellectual curiosity of students, and motivate them to remain in school and pursue both practical and academic interests. Learning based on students' interests and real experience would eliminate the school culture of competition and individual achievement. In its place, a cooperative and highly interdependent enterprise would emerge, one that mirrored the society outside. In this school, now perfectly synchronized with the community, students would be prepared for successful and productive lives.

Within this elaborately reasoned framework, Dewey and the Progressives laid the intellectual groundwork for a long succession of education reform movements. Their belief in the power of experiential learning to stimulate motivation and productive learning provided the missing rationale for why schools failed to teach and why students left school in large numbers. The notion that schools failed to socialize youth because of a mismatch between society and school shifted the attention of educators from competition to cooperation and from individual achievement to social adjustment, and successfully united two competing themes in American education--experiential and academic learning. This spawned the life adjustment movement of the late 40s and 50s, the new learning theories that drove the curriculum reform efforts of the late 50s and early 60s, and the alternative schools movement, which took the nation's schools by storm in the later 60s and early 70s and stimulated the recent rise of career education. The Progres-

sives' legacy was a vastly different conception of the purposes of secondary schooling and a much expanded role for schools in preparing youth for life. Where preparation for adulthood had once meant moral and literacy instruction, it increasingly came to mean education for work and the activities of daily life.

Effects on Curriculum and School Structure

The introduction of experience to education revolutionized and greatly expanded the curriculum of the American high school. The life adjustment movement, which extended the school's responsibilities to preparing youth for the social and leisure activities of life, "enriched" the curriculum with experiential courses for all students, including the academically inclined: band, chorus, driver education, human relations, homemaking, and consumer education. The life adjustment movement declined when educators became uneasy about the eclipse of academic study and began to complain that American schools had become too soft. But renewed attention to basic skills and academic instruction in the late 50s expanded the high school curriculum even further. Secondary schools around the country added advanced placement courses for talented students to the standard college preparatory curriculum--many based on learning by doing. Advanced courses in foreign languages were provided, as were courses that had so far been taught in college: psychology, sociology, and anthropology. In the mid-1960s, modular scheduling and mini-courses permitted schools to offer a broad range of brief, highly specialized courses, which further increased the size and scope of the curriculum. And the alternative schools movement awarded academic credit for student participation in school govern-

ance, human relations training, peer counseling, and even meditation. The introduction of experience as an appropriate domain of school instruction thus not only expanded the school curriculum; it also encouraged questions about what were appropriate subjects for study and academic credit in high schools. Increasingly it seemed that all of the activities of life could be subjects of formal study, and the distinctions between experience and academic learning became more and more blurred. Everything from sex to skiing, from gardening to home repair seemed worthy of study and amenable to development as a formal school curriculum.

Experiential education--from vocational training to the progeny of the Progressive movement--also had an impact on the organization and structure of schools. The former academic disciplines had already evolved into departments of study, and their staffs had been specially trained and certified for instructing in one discipline. Very little departmental overlap occurred, because all believed that each discipline required expert knowledge and particular instructional skills. Special interest groups had developed and reinforced the boundaries between the disciplines. Thus, the high school organization had become highly structured and sharply differentiated according to subjects taught and administrative or teaching roles of the staff. With the introduction of vocational education and other experience-based courses, the school became still more internally differentiated and specialized than it had been with a single academic curriculum. New staff roles and interest groups developed around the new, rapidly multiplying areas of specialization. Advanced placement and more sophisticated or technically challenging courses made even further demands on the qualifica-

tions and training of teachers, and some school districts and states began to require graduate-level credentials for high school teachers. All this combined to separate the schools still further from the community, and to reinforce the notion that teaching demanded highly trained experts and could not be done by those not specially prepared.

Career Education

While schools thus became more complex, internally differentiated, and staffed by trained professionals, the idea that youth belonged in schools persisted. Throughout the earliest manual training programs, later movements for vocational education, the turn-of-the-century torrent of high school and trade school specialization, and the mid-century enthusiasm for life adjustment training, this belief was seldom questioned. But in the next few decades, a new wave of disenchantment with public education arose, this time resting not only on the old complaints about schooling, but also on arguments that the bigger, more highly organized and differentiated high schools in themselves presented an obstacle to educating youngsters for adulthood. The new critics argued that the schools had so successfully insulated themselves from the community, and were so rigidly bound by regulations and professional interests, that they were unable to provide schooling relevant to youth's future needs in settings which were more open, more equitable, more humane--indeed, more like real life. Furthermore, America's youth seemed to be drifting away from their cultural moorings, another problem which many blamed on the inadequacies of the schools. Many thought that schools were beyond reform, and that the community could better prepare youth for adult life and work.

In this social and intellectual milieu, the career education movement began to germinate. In seizing on the notion of community participation in education, career education represented a major shift away from the original premises of schooling. If schools were once supposed to protect youth from community life while preparing them for work, such protection now seemed dysfunctional: the community now seemed a better place for preparing youth to learn about work.

Footnotes to Chapter I

1. Hofstadter, Richard. Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 302.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 303.

4. Tyack, David. The One Best System (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 46.

5. Ibid., p. 30.

6. Ibid., p. 185.

7. Vassar, Rena L. (ed.). Social History of American Education, Vol. II: 1860 to the Present (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 4.

8. Hofstadter, p. 326.

II. EXPERIENCE-BASED CAREER EDUCATION

The career education movement held that schools were not preparing young people for adulthood, and that this was due to their separation from society. The failure of high schools to prepare youth for life was an old complaint in American education. But it became more strident in the tumultuous social and educational climate of the 1960s and 1970s, when succeeding waves of social science reports announced that many public institutions were failing--public schools prominent among them. At the same time, the press was giving considerable attention to research that seemingly showed a decline in the income value of college degrees, and other studies asserted that high school dropouts did just as well on the job market as similarly situated high school graduates. In addition, James Coleman and Christopher Jencks announced that schools differed little in their impact on academic achievement of students or their adult success and everyone knew that the cost of education was rising wildly. To add to these gloomy reports, Ivan Illich had gained considerable intellectual currency during the 1960s and his ideas about the destructive power of schools took hold. Many began to believe the ideas preached by John Dewey and brought up to date by Paul Goodman: that school often was boring; that experience was livelier; that real apprenticeships were preferable to make-work shop courses; that contact with the real thing was better than embracing a standardized text.

These ideas fermented in the popular and intellectual culture of the late 1960s, and by the early 1970s they had bubbled over into officialdom. Several government and professional commissions announced that there was a

serious "youth" problem.[1] By collecting adolescents in boring and frustrating surroundings segregated from the real world of work and adults, secondary schools supposedly reinforced a pathological youth culture that was "spinning out of control," posing a serious threat to social integration. The reports claimed that high schools teach things that are irrelevant to young people's lives, and are so rule and role bound as to make healthy socialization nearly impossible. Students are kept in passive and subservient roles, and denied opportunities to exercise responsibility and initiative and to control the course of their lives and work in school. In addition, students are reportedly walled off from real life and working adults, and have little chance to learn the appropriate social behavior for success in jobs and careers.

The reports were pessimistic about the ability and the willingness of schools and schoolpeople to change. They claimed that the organization is rigid and bureaucratic, bound by vested interests more concerned with maintaining the status quo than with adapting to the changing needs of modern youth. Critics thus called for a raft of changes, many of which sought to get adolescents out of school: reducing the age of compulsory attendance, lowering the minimum wage to encourage the employment of adolescents, and creating school programs that allowed youth to work. Some also tried to devise ways of using schools to legitimize experience further--everything from making people with "real experience" into teachers to giving students academic credit for work or community service out of school. Experience was to be returned to the community.

By the turn of the decade, these ideas had gained considerable

momentum. They helped shape a new diagnosis of what was wrong with schooling, and as in the past provided the basis for new reforms. This led to a major federal initiative by U.S. Education Commissioner Sidney Marland, who in 1971 allocated $9 million in discretionary funds for programs that would "bridge the gap" between school and work. Since then, career education has received substantial financial, legislative, and personnel support at the federal, state, and local levels. In 1972, Congress created an Office of Career Education in the U.S. Office of Education and appropriated $10 million to fund career education projects. In 1974, 35 states reported having a staff responsible for career education,[2] compared with only one person on a state staff in 1968. Also, 25 states had evolved a state plan for career education, and five states had legislation to that end. At the local level 26% of the nation's districts had adopted or were planning to adopt a formal written policy with regard to career education in 1974-75. Federal, state, and local support amounted to about $31.5 million, excluding vocational education, in 860 school districts.[3]

In 1974, it was estimated that 28% to 47% of secondary school students had participated in some form of career education in elementary or secondary school[4]--programs aimed at career awareness, career exploration, or career preparation.[5] Program activities varied with students' ages, but in general, high school students engaged in "career exploration," following their interests and aptitudes to learn more about jobs that appealed to them. Next they either continued exploring careers or began working in specific areas to acquire skills that would make them immediately employable upon graduation. At the same time, teachers attempted to "infuse" career information into all aspects of the school curriculum at every grade

level, thereby teaching students to become more aware of the practical applications and career possibilities of everything they studied--from art to zoology. Regardless of program specifics, the goal of career education was to prepare students for life by letting them learn about the world of work. Career education was thus responsive to the new thinking about youth and schooling, but its reform proposals were far from radical. The idea was not to dispense with, but to add to what schools were doing--and to shift the focus to work.

Experience-Based Career Education

The Program's Development

Experience-Based Career Education attempted to put into practice many of these changing notions about school, the community, and the best preparation for life. It was one of three career education model programs developed in response to U.S. Education Commissioner Sidney Marland's career education initiative, and the one that was the most ambitious. It not only aspired to break down the barriers between school and life by putting youth out in the community; but it also proposed to intervene in many rules and traditional school practices so that employers and community organizations could more readily participate in the academic as well as the work-related education of teen-agers.

As first conceived by the National Center for Education Research and Development of the U.S. Office of Education, EBCE was to be developed as one of three career education models, and to be housed outside schools, in employer organizations. This expressed the hope that the context for student learning would be the "real" world outside the traditional influence of public school. As an employer-based career education program, EBCE was to be a self-contained alternative to the academic and vocational

offerings of traditional school. Like the public school system, the program sought to serve all secondary school students. With its focus on work, it was expected to have strong appeal for students and to provide competition for the full range of traditional secondary school programs.

Examination of this program design, however, disclosed a host of fiscal, political, and other problems[6] which required attention if the program was to become a reality. Two regional educational laboratories, Far West Laboratory (FWL) and Research for Better Schools (RBS), were thus commissioned to study the feasibility of employer-based programs, and these studies confirmed that indeed there were problems. One difficulty was that while employers were willing to participate in such a program, it was not to the extent hoped for. In particular, it had been intemded that, in addition to teaching students about work through experience, employers would assume responsibility for providing academic instruction; and this they were not willing to do.[7] Another problem concerned the wish to place students at the work site for the entire school day. This was opposed by employers for fear that regular employees might view the student as a threat, especially in jobs for which they might have the requisite skills, such as clerical and trade occupations (FWL and RBS feasibility reports). Finally, EBCE would have to compete with the wide range of existing vocational programs that already demanded employer cooperation and commitment. In view of these concerns, the two laboratories and their federal sponsors began to think in terms of programs which involved the schools more than originally planned, and which were located in or near them. With this change, the program, which had first been proposed as "Employer-Based Career

Education," became "Experience-Based Career Education."

In October, 1971, the Office of Education directed the two educational laboratories to conclude their feasibility studies and to begin developing operational EBCE programs in demonstration high schools. To this end, OE funded three additional research and development laboratories--North West Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), South West Regional Educational Laboratory (SWREL), and Appalachian Educational Laboratory (AEL)--to begin developing their own versions of EBCE. By the following spring, four of the laboratories had prepared plans for the design and development of EBCE, as SWREL had decided not to be involved in the operational development of the program. In August of 1972, the contracts with the four laboratories were transferred to the newly created National Institute of Education, and the laboratories continued their work under NIE's auspices. By the fall of 1972, their demonstration programs were operating in four local school districts.[8] The development of this career education program thus began quickly, and with few federal guidelines and little direction from the federal sponsors. The laboratories were virtually left to interpret on their own the latest ideas for combining experiential and academic learning through the vehicle of work.[9]

The Four Models of EBCE

Under these circumstances, the four developers did the only thing they could--they relied on their own intuition about what such a program should be like. The result was four versions of EBCE that differed in many respects but had several common features. The model developed by AEL in Charleston, West Virginia, reflected its developers' systems orientation and experience in traditional vocational education programs: the laboratory

is situated in a region of traditional American values, hard work, and chronic unemployment. Instead of attending classes, AEL's EBCE students were to spend 70% to 80% of their time at employer sites of their choice, completing their personalized academic and career programs.[10] The EBCE "curriculum" was designed around the courses and credits required by the local high school, but the program was a self-contained alternative to traditional course work. Program staff were to work with each student individually to "build an integrated career exploration plan and an academic program based on the student's stated learning objectives."[11]

FWL in San Francisco developed a model which reflected the values and life style of the urban West Coast--where self-discovery was considered important, and the sensitivity movement was born. Its version of EBCE thus focused on behavior, and bore a strong resemblance to free schools. It stressed student choice, self-direction, and the development of an inquisitive sense that would help students become better consumers of career opportunities. The program was designed for local implementation in various configurations: for a cross-section of students or a special target group, as a program within school or as a separate school, and as a full-time or a part-time option. The students' study plans involved individual and small group projects jointly approved by the program staff and the community employer or "resource person." The projects "blended career development with basic skills, life skills and academic learning, enabling students to earn course credits in standard areas through community-based research, experience and related reading and discussion."[12] In this model, students spent from 20% to 80% of their time in the community.

RBS of Philadelphia developed its model within the setting of large Eastern urban schools with a heavy minority population. As a result, it emphasized the acquisition of basic skills. And because the developers knew that the Philadelphia schools had developed many exciting innovations but had been unable to move them into the system's mainstream, RBS sought to develop a model which was useful, acceptable, and not exotic--so it could be easily implemented and widely adopted. This model was designed to "operate on and benefit from the regular school curriculum."[13] Half the students' work was to be based on the parent school's course requirements and schedules, and the remainder was to include community work, career guidance, and basic skills instruction. Basic skills work was to be individual, and students were to spend about 20% of their time in the community.

Finally, NWRL's version of EBCE was concerned with helping students develop initiative and a new sense of self and responsibility. Unlike the other West Coast model, it was less overtly reformist in style. It mirrored its region's concern with community control, and paid attention to basic skills development. It emphasized the contributions and opinions solicited from businesses that might not only provide training opportunities for students, but were potential employers of graduates. The program was developed as a "full-time, comprehensive, interdisciplinary program with three curriculum areas--basic skills, life skills, and career development. Learning strategies include career exploration, projects, skill building, competency certification, student journals and seminars."[14] Each student's individual learning plan was to be developed jointly by student and staff, and students spent about 50% of their time in the community.

The mold for EBCE, then, was set differently in the four laboratories. And the forces which shaped its early development were as much political, social and cultural as they were empirical. Each version reflected the background, experience, and philosophical perspective of its developers. And each reflected its developer's social and political context, as well as the geographical and cultural influences of its region. But in its own way, each version was a serious effort to integrate academic and experiential learning within a format which responded to the prevailing national sentiment about combining schooling with work. The laboratories thus evolved domesticated interpretations of the critics' ideas. As program innovators and curriculum developers, they shaped EBCE into the forms that they knew best and that they believed would be practical and appealing to public school educators. In one sense, then, the program's developers picked up the themes of school critics, many of which had been echoed and endorsed by the federal sponsors, and translated them into programs for local adoption. But in another sense, the developers backed off from the themes. Their knowledge of local schools led them to design programs which, though novel and quite different from current practices in many public schools, were made up of component parts not unknown to educators.

While the models represented different notions of how these themes could best be realized, they also had several common features. In keeping with the original prescriptions, they all proposed new sorts of classrooms (the community as the classroom), different relationships with teachers (teachers as counselors and facilitators), and flexible student programs which included several hours or days of the school week out in the community. NIE's publication for potential EBCE adopters describes the models as follows:

> First, each program is student-centered and provides personalized learning experiences to all students. Second, the focus of student learning activities is in the community at cooperating experience sites. Finally, each of the . . . . programs has developed procedures and materials for integrating academic learning with career experiences.[15]

The materials and procedures mentioned--which also provided guidance on such program issues as recruiting and training students and employers, selecting and training appropriate staff, analyzing employer sites to develop a series of informative student site activities, and obtaining program support from school boards, parents, and the community--described a comprehensive education alternative and a major change in the way schooling had traditionally been conceived and organized. EBCE came complete with blueprints, was accompanied by laboratory training and technical assistance, and was supported by millions of federal dollars for research and development.

During its first four years, at a cost of about $20 million, the program was "implemented." It was the object of substantial evaluation efforts by both the developers and the Educational Testing Service, which concluded that the program was successful both in teaching youth about work and in instructing them in the practical skills and social behavior thought important for successful adult life. Largely on the basis of the developers' evaluations, EBCE was designated by the NIE/OE Joint Dissemination and Review Panel as an exemplary vocational education program, making it available for national dissemination with Vocational Education Act Part D funding. As of the spring of 1978, the program was operating in forty states with three-year federal Part D grants, and in an additional hundred-odd districts with other federal, state and local funding. In these districts, the funding for implementation was left entirely to local initiative. Some of these districts received lab support in the form of

free materials, staff training, and technical assistance in exchange for evaluation data provided to the labs. Others purchased materials and support services from the labs in whatever amounts they desired. The NIE's dissemination plans for EBCE also included modest two-year EBCE "capacity building" grants to four state departments of education which chose to apply, the notion being that the SEA's, with lab assistance, would acquire the staff capability to train local districts to implement EBCE. The following year, 1977, 13 additional states were selected for this capacity building project, and received free lab assistance but no federal support. In a further effort to encourage the program's spread, the NIE supported early efforts to establish a national network of EBCE practitioners. As of 1980, the National Experience Based Career Education Association boasted several hundred members, a small paid staff, and was entirely self-supporting. In a brief period of time, EBCE had become a major national school and work program, enjoying widespread popularity.

EBCE Implementation in School Districts

The "implementation" of EBCE has not been simple, nor has it been thought of simply. Rarely has the innovation been described by federal agencies as a concrete set of processes or practices that local educators were expected to carry out without change. Its implementation by school districts was marked by controversy, revision, redevelopment, negotiation, and adaptation. Much as the laboratories had responded to their particular settings and responsibilities in designing the innovation, so too did local school personnel in implementing it. Translating a major innovation with many broad and often vague goals from idea to practice was thus more than a simple problem of "execution."

One result of these circumstances was that when the money and the EBCE materials reached local districts, they were used in diverse and often unexpected ways. District administrators and school boards, principals and teachers, parents, and employers each took the program as an occasion for improvisation, consistent with professional situations, job responsibilities, and preferences. The EBCE program seemed to be a group of themes that inspired a variety of local compositions, variations, and improvisations. These varied not only by role, but also among members of any given role group--as well as over time as local programs evolved. In addition, school traditions and regulations, and state and federal laws, restrained the degree to which the new ideas about schooling and work could be put into practice.

As the professional and regional milieus of the laboratories had shaped their interpretations of the ideas, so did those of schoolpeople lead to different local interpretations of the models and procedures. Like the developers, many school personnel spoke of the program in terms of the prevailing criticisms of education. Yet the laboratory models were further adapted locally to meet the needs of local participants, with several important results. First, EBCE in local schools became more school-based than was originally conceived, or even planned by 3 of the 4 lab developers. Students spent less time in the community and more time in school than had been hoped. Second, student experiences in the community reflected the reluctance of both schoolpeople and employers to engage in a close working partnership. Third, the desired union of academic and experiential learning continued to be more easily discussed than achieved. In good measure, this effort to teach students more about real life by getting them out of school succeeded in introducing more diversity to the schools and increasing the responsibilities of schoolpeople.

The story of EBCE's implementation is thus rich and enormously complex. It involves many levels in the education enterprise, each responding within the constraints of its professional domain to the many complaints about students and schools which rose to prominence in the 1960s. This report is an effort to portray the story of EBCE's implementation in local districts. It is an effort to consider, within the context of this program, what happened to the policy ideas and proposals for reforming secondary education with work that dominated discussion of secondary education in the early 1970s and which gave birth to EBCE as well as many other programs.

Footnotes to Chapter II

1. The reports and studies referred to include: "Youth: Transition to Adulthood," Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee, June 1973 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); "The Reform of Secondary Education," National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, July 1973 (New York: McGraw Hill, 1973); Ruth Weinstock, ed., "The Greening of the High School" (New York: IDEA-EFL, March 1973); "Secondary Schools in a Changing World: This We Believe," Report of the Task Force on Secondary Schools (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975); Willard Wirtz and the National Manpower Institute, "The Boundless Resource" (Washington, D.C.: New Republic Books, 1975). An informative review of these ideas is presented in "Youth Policy in Transition" (The RAND Corporation, 1976).

2. Council of Chief State School Officers.

3. These figures are taken from a study by Kevin J. Gilmartin, "Career Education in Public Schools, 1975-1976: A National Survey" (Palo Alto: American Institute for Research, May 1976). According to Sidney High of the U.S. Office of Education, they are the most comprehensive figures available as of Fall 1979.

4. Ibid.

5. Rossi, R., "Career Education," Teacher's College Record, Vol. 8, No. 4, May 1979, p. 645.

6. Yabroff, B., Documentation of Process and Content of Planning Team Effort, January 31, 1971.

7. Stalford, C. B., "EBCE: A Conceptual Analysis," National Institute of Education, Career Education Program, May 9, 1974, p. 13, Ch. III.

8. Ibid.

9. The story of the early years of Experience-Based Career Education development and dissemination is complex and beyond the scope of this study. For a detailed treatment of the years 1971 through 1974, see McGowan, Eleanor Farrar, "Innovation and Fantasy," unpublished analytic paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass., 1975.

10. The various models of EBCE evolved over time, changing markedly from original conception through local implementation. The descriptions offered here were generally accepted as accurate at the time the Huron Institute study of EBCE was undertaken. These descriptions were taken from A Comparison of Four Experience-Based Career Education Programs, published by NIE in 1976 with the prior review and approval of the four laboratories.

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

III. SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM REFORM

Experience-Based Career Education grew out of charges that the high school curriculum was stale and irrelevant but could be revitalized by new teaching arrangements and by linking course content to work. As such EBCE can be viewed as a curriculum reform. The idea was to eliminate the dichotomy between academic learning and work by combining the two, providing a "holistic" and immediately relevant education through a focus on learning through experience. EBCE thus intended to alter the cognitive content of the high school curriculum, and hence also school processes. Its central goal was to introduce new types of knowledge into the curriculum--to reshape, and in some cases even to replace, academic knowledge with experiential or "ordinary" knowledge--knowledge derived from one's life activities rather than from books. At the same time, the innovators meant to change some of the ways of conveying curriculum content to students--to reform the pedagogy of the high school by replacing traditional classroom practices with more flexible and individual approaches to teaching and learning.

At the outset, the proposed reform of curriculum content was acknowledged by EBCE advocates to be a major intervention. EBCE would move students into the workplace and bring work into the academic curriculum, revising it to include non-classroom events and material. The curriculum would thus be grounded in experience, rather than in the traditional disciplines; and the walls between subjects would be removed to allow an interdisciplinary curriculum fitted more to real life experience than to academic subjects.

To reform curriculum content, EBCE developers recognized that certain school processes must change. Not only would students spend less time in school and more in the community, but teachers would spend more time with fewer students. Teachers and students together would exercise more control over the scheduling and content of the curriculum, and interact through more personal processes, than the typical high school would allow. In particular, EBCE programs emphasized individual instruction as the preferred style of pedagogy, and favored competency-based and collaborative evaluation of achievement. In its attempt to revise the curriculum through work, EBCE thus in many ways became a process reform. To reform the academic content of the curriculum by infusing work experience, the process and style of classroom instruction was first to be altered.

Although EBCE was conceived as a community-oriented program--one in which most of the activity would occur through employers in the workplace--in practice students spent most of their time in school. True, employers were involved, and students did spend time in the community. But the overriding reality of the situation--as contrasted with earlier "employer-based" ideas--was that EBCE was invariably implemented as a school-based reform. The programs were operated by school districts, housed in school buildings, managed by school administrators, and staffed by teachers and counselors. They were developed by educators working within the context of the public high school, and so were influenced far more by the culture of schools than by that of the workplace.

In practice, most EBCE programs thus took the form of curriculum innovation rather than innovation tied closely to work, and their content and process characteristics were not unlike those of other contemporary school-based reforms. In fact, programs tended to become umbrellas under which

several reform ideas of the period were clustered and nurtured. In particular, in trying to construct a curriculum that would fuse work and academics, local programs often emphasized individualization, competency-based instruction, and basic skills training.

Integrating Academics and Experience

A central concept of EBCE was the integration of work experiences with academic disciplines. The goal was to introduce new kinds of knowledge into the high school curriculum by treating experience as valid subject matter. Students would have community experiences, relate them to the traditional disciplines by various methods, acquire a different kind of learning in the process, and be evaluated accordingly. Essentially, EBCE was meant to bring academic study and experiential learning--uneasy bedmates in American education--together into a manageable whole. But in this instance, as with earlier reforms which sought the same union, it proved difficult to achieve. Teachers found that it was hard to integrate work into the academic curriculum and to devise rigorous learning activities that were related to the world of work.

This integration was to be accomplished through several techniques. One model of EBCE used a sophisticated assessment process and matrix analysis to identify for each student areas where occupational interest and academic study overlapped. Another model stressed the importance of career development activities: students would meet weekly in group counseling sessions to discuss community experiences and their possible relationship to schoolwork. But the "project" approach was the chief vehicle for integrating work and school subjects. The project was an individual student assignment focused on a central concept or cluster of concepts, and drawing on both out-of-school experiences and academic skills and knowledge. As defined by EBCE, a project may be in one subject or cross-disciplinary, may be narrow or broad in scope, and may

last from days to months. Indeed, the project is difficult to describe, due to this variability. The range of project activities is suggested by the following reports from EBCE teachers. One staff member explained that the students in his program were required to do a project each semester, which might consist of "anything" that would reflect involvement or interest in a community site.

> "One kid did a project on modeling and demonstrated to the class the different poses that were required . . . . Another girl did a project at a data [processing] center, in which she keypunched for fifteen minutes to the employer's satisfaction."*[1]

Another teacher in a different locale described the wide variety of activities in her students' projects:

> "Some students ran research surveys; others had actually drawn up house plans; some had presented photographic materials; some had taught classes both in academics and physical education; some wrote poems; and some put on such activities as spaghetti dinners for fundraising."[2]

A California teacher described a long-term government project:

> "I've got [a] student who follows the legislative process in Sacramento on a bill for the deaf--he's given presentations in government classes and it's very useful because it's all information about how the legislative process actually works, not just how books say it works."[3]

Students involved in EBCE project activities similarly carried out various tasks, often within the same project. A young man who had recently completed a placement at a local police department reported that he "took some pictures of the police department"--the radar unit, the squad car, and a few other things--and put them on a couple of pages. He said he also "wrote about them a little," and made a small booklet of his visit.[4] A student who had a bank-related project said that he "pretty much charted the flow of currency" in and around the different departments, and prepared a large chart of how the money moves from one department to another.[5] In another program, a project

---

*In this and the following sections, we quote extensively from both interviews and our field notes. To distinguish the two, we have set quotation marks around excerpts from interviews but not around Huron field staff's commentary recorded in the field notes.

for a student placed at an agency for handicapped children entailed several activities:

> The first . . . was to write a report on horses; the next was to talk with his learning manager about how horses and children fit together; the next was to write a report on epilepsy and cerebral palsy. Another activity consisted of watching a film strip on the handicapped; and the final activity, to visit another agency for handicapped children.[6]

While no two projects are the same in content, it is the process that makes them significant here. Ideally, teacher and student negotiate a topic that integrates the student's current out-of-school work experience with one or more academic subjects; they set goals, identify available resources, and outline tasks for completing the project; and then the student works on the project independently (or, in some cases, with other students). Student and teacher review the project when it is complete, and grades and credit are assigned. Although not all EBCE programs adopted the project approach per se, most stressed individual approaches to integrating academics and work that were quite similar.

But there were several problems in incorporating non-traditional events and activities into the cognitive curriculum. To begin with, some teachers saw the risks and problems as too great and were reluctant to try it. Others seemed willing to try, but were obliged to follow the district's approved career curriculum. One midwestern teacher cited grade level differences between students and lab materials, and local course requirements as impediments to use of EBCE curriculum materials:

> "It was a little difficult to use the Program Guide, because [it's] set up only for juniors and seniors. Because we have tenth graders in this program, there are real differences in the kinds of courses they're supported to take. Some of the courses in the Program Guide were on biology, but all of the kids in the EBCE program need to get biology credit for graduation."[7]

As a result, the students in her program wound up following the standard tenth grade curriculum:

> "So they're sort of working in the regular textbooks. When the county has regulations about biology for sophomores, it's hard for them to change. So we decided that they would be better off being more like the traditional classroom, and using the book like in the regular courses."[8]

A small number of districts made no visible attempt to accomplish the reform; students continued following the standard curriculum and using standard textbooks for their academic work. Some of these programs simply used courses and teachers already available in the high school for the required subjects, while in others the EBCE staff relied on traditional methods and texts for imparting the academic content. One EBCE teacher commented on a situation shared by others. From our field notes:

> She was using the regular book in the classroom, and she pointed to an assignment on the board that said, "Read Chapter 17." She told me that students pretty much stuck to the book for their classes, and that they often did different assignments, depending on the amount of work and effort they wanted to put into the class. Basically, though, the textbook was a common reference point for everyone in the class.[9]

Not surprisingly, students in EBCE courses adhering closely to standard texts experienced little difference between EBCE and regular academic courses. Many students echoed one girl's assessment that her English class was "pretty much like regular class," except for filling in job application forms and writing business letters. They were reading a book and had to take a test on that, "just like in regular class."[10] Another student, asked whether her classes in the program differed differed from regular classes, replied:

> "You have to have math, English, and history--you just have

to have them . . . they're pretty much like everything else. Yeah, it's just the same."[11]

When special EBCE materials developed by the laboratories were used, there was no guarantee that the courses involved would strike students as a great departure. A student who reported using "skill booklets" in math still considered the course "the same as any of the others," and responded that "everything is the same" when asked to compare his English class to the regular high school offering.[12] In programs that did try to introduce non-traditional material into the standard curriculum, it was more likely by way of an add-on to a course of study, rather than a change in the content already there. For example, a unit on "careers in science" might be added to a natural science course.

When full-scale integration of experience and academics was attempted, however--as was probably the case in most of the EBCE programs we studied--problems arose that were not easily overcome by program adjustments. In particular, learning in the workplace cannot easily be integrated with learning in school. In virtually every program, teachers reported considerable difficulty in incorporating non-traditional events and activities into the cognitive curriculum on the one hand; and on the other, in developing substantive academic learning activities that were related to work experiences. The English curriculum seemed the most amenable to such integration: students were able to read and write about work. But teachers and students alike recounted problems with relating community experiences to math and science. A teacher told us that "one girl is taking geometry, and I cannot match it with anything."[13] Another teacher said that integrating

academics with community placements was "particularly a difficulty in relation to upper-division and math courses," but easier in such areas as communications, social studies, and general science.[14]

Others agreed. A teacher reported that tying the learning into what went on at sites was a real problem--with the exception of English, because:

> "Anything that had to be written about their projects or the site could be seen as related to English and relevant to both the work site and academic preparation."[15]

But generally speaking, she characterized the integration process as one of "alledging tying [subjects] into their learning on site."[16] Another teacher reported that biology was a very difficult subject to relate to work sites; he saw this as a "real difficulty, but occasionally we luck out."[17]

Although opinions differed on the severity of this problem, teachers and students agreed that the academic and experiential did not always mesh well. On the optimistic side, a teacher estimated that all but four or five of the projects of her 25 students were "correlated in some way;" the exceptions would include odd situations such as a fashion design placement, where "it's horribly hard to find something in basic skills that would match up with fashion design."[18] On the other hand, a teacher who expressed some frustration with trying to "set up some assignments to relate directly to the activity" was hopeful that "in 50% of the cases they actually match."[19]

What often resulted were somewhat woolly projects or activities only distantly related to students' site experiences. Thus, student academic work in EBCE was frequently not much more closely linked to jobs and careers than in traditional programs--nor was the content of the school's cognitive

curriculum significantly altered. What occurred more often was a change in the way the cognitive curriculum was conveyed to students, as EBCE in practice became predominantly a reform of school processes.

Individual Instruction

In seeking to reform the pedagogic process, the unit of change for EBCE was the individual student. As less emphasis was to be placed on traditional course content in the academic disciplines, the integration of school and work would be organized around each student's individual learning program. If work experience was to be given the chance to inform and change the curriculum, the gap between school and work needed to be bridged. But no institutional bridges were readily available, given the deep split between school and workplace. So small bridges would be built student by student, as individual students moved back and forth between the worlds of school and work. Different students would have different out-of-school experiences, and so the experiential component of the curriculum would vary from student to student. And since each student's academic needs would also be unique, different academic components would result. Individual projects were therefore needed to accommodate a wide range of site experiences, personal interests, basic skills, and credit requirements.

To make this individual approach possible, the teaching and learning process would need to be drastically revised. Rather than traditional large-group, textbook-oriented classrooms, EBCE was to use a more flexible and student-centered pedagogy that emphasized one-on-one teacher-student interactions and small group sessions, self-paced individual basic skills programs for diagnosed academic weaknesses, and the availability of academic,

career, and personal counseling. Pedagogical alternatives that might enhance the opportunities for individualization became a common concern among EBCE program staff.

In most EBCE programs we studied, instruction was more individual and flexible than in the regular school. There was, of course, considerable variation across programs: some were structured like school courses, and others required that students do traditional classwork in addition to their EBCE work. In most districts, though, the individual approach was built into the structure of the program, as students usually worked alone, in a small group, or with a teacher. A common observation was that EBCE teachers attempted to use individual assignments as much as possible, relying on groups for some purposes. In one program, the teacher "would write up a common assignment for everyone" in the American Studies course; but for the English, math, and science courses, everyone received an individual assignment, and "often people were doing pretty much the same type of work but at different levels and different speeds."[20] In another district, students received individual assignments in English, while they might work with others on the same chapter in biology and then take the same test.[21] And in some programs with small budgets and few staff, students took courses with non-program teachers but still enjoyed individual instruction. In an alternative program where this was the case, students got all their academics individually from teachers on the regular high school faculty:

> "They take their academic courses with a part-time teacher from the high school, and almost all of it is on a one-to-one basis. Most of the [studying], however, is done on their own."[22]

Regardless of program structure, by and large EBCE gave students more opportunity for individual work with teachers than is normally found in high schools. A typical EBCE teacher had a schedule on the wall by his desk that showed the school week divided into half-hour blocks, with a student assigned to each. He reported that he met with each student at least once weekly, and several were scheduled for two appointments weekly; in addition, there were open blocks when any student could come in for a chat.[23] A counselor likewise said he had "plenty of time" in which he worked with students on an individual basis, as well as two periods weekly during which he met with small groups "to talk about themselves, about their site experiences, and so on."[24] Individual and small-group settings such as these were the rule in EBCE, rather than the exception.

Students and teachers alike described this aspect of the program as one of its strongest attractions. Asked what had made them think seriously about joining the program. most staff members mentioned "the opportunity to work one-on-one with students on a range of subjects" as a strong motivating force.[25] Many cited a long-standing belief that high school education should be more personal, and reported that "the individual attention the students received" was the most important factor.[26] Most EBCE staff members would agree with a learning coordinator who saw individual attention as the real strength of the program because "it gave the students a chance to realize that they were somebody and that they had assets and abilities which they could do something with."[27]

And students seemed to agree. They all seemed to "like the individual attention" best, in contrast to regular school, where, a student claimed,

"the teachers never used to even know my name--but here they all know it and they like to try and make an appointment with you."[28] A student who had a history of problems with authority explained that the program was different in that the learning coordinators were "easier to talk to, there is more one-to-one attention, they're a lot cooler, and they expect things."[29] Generally, students seemed very conscious of the differences between EBCE and regular school along this dimension, and were often quite verbal about their appreciation of them, as demonstrated by this example:

> "It's different because we're not required to do stuff on schedule; also in the classes we have a lot more time to discuss. When there are big classes nobody can say more than one or two things, and usually people don't say anything and a couple of people dominate the conversation. Or maybe there really isn't any discussion at all. Also, you don't have to leave class when the bell rings, so that if you've got a really good discussion going you can just keep on going . . . . It's really nice because there were only three people in my American Studies workshop this time as opposed to about 30 students in a regular history class."[30]

Some students reported that their grades had improved during their tenure with EBCE, and atrributed the changes to the increased attention from teachers. When a young woman was asked why she was doing so much better in school than the prior year, she responded, "I understand my work better, because [the EBCE teacher] explains it to me. In regular school, if you don't get it, you just have to bear it."[31] Although some improvement in student grades in certain locales may be attributed to the phenomenon of "grade inflation"--as staff stress positive reinforcement through greater rewards--that did not seem to be the case for this student, as others in her program did not report a similar rise in performance. Rather, it suggests that in some cases, there can be tangible academic benefits from the

increase in individual attention offered through a program like EBCE. Another explanation for improved grades was offered by a math teacher recalling her experiences with individualized math instruction:

> "There's a special chemistry that begins to operate in these teaching situations. Students don't have to do their work in classroom situations, where they can easily sit at the back of the class and fall rapidly behind. But when teachers and students are working in a one-to-one situation, if the student hasn't done his work, then there's no ballgame. Students feel more obligated to get their work done so that the lessons can proceed."[32]

In this teacher's view, then, individualization produces real gains for reasons beyond custom-made instruction. Students feel obliged to work, and not surprisingly, learn as a result.

That most students and teachers welcomed the individual instruction of EBCE with open arms explains why individualization tended to emerge as a prominent feature of the reform. Students bored with classroom lectures and teachers burdened by large classes similarly embraced the change. In fact, many EBCE participants reported that they had either been in other innovative programs before EBCE, or had long waited for the chance. The idea of reforming the teaching process through individual instruction was of currency in schools at the time of EBCE's appearance. It came as no great surprise, then, that schoolpeople made much of this aspect of the reform.

Competence-Based Education

Like individualization, the competency-based education movement was beginning to gain momentum at the time of EBCE's inception and development, and its influence was manifested in various ways through EBCE. The competency movement held that schools should more consciously develop specific

competencies among all students. Although advocates of competency-based education have been criticized for being too global and vague in their definitions of the attributes contained in the competencies,[33] they seem to agree on two points: competencies should be specified, and mastery of competencies can often be demonstrated through performance.

The movement gave rise in the late 1960s and early 1970s to such phenomena as "competency-based teacher education," in which specific classroom attributes were identified as useful, and student teachers showed their grasp of these methods by actually teaching demonstration lessons to their peers, rather than by writing lesson plans and submitting them for approval as in the past. And at the secondary school level, the 1970s witnessed the growth of "competency testing" programs, a related phenomenon. In competency testing, for example, high school seniors might be required to show mastery of prescribed sets of language and computational skills judged by the state to comprise minimum standards for graduation. Some states had been quite active in promoting a competency-based approach, encouraging and in some cases even requiring districts to incorporate it into programs.

The competency movement influenced EBCE in several ways. In a desire to differentiate EBCE from academic courses (even when teaching similar subject matter), EBCE teachers often emphasized performance over traditional criteria for judging achievement. The individual student program was usually flexible enough to allow any number of alternatives to the usual high school tests and papers: students could build a model, demonstrate a new skill to the teachers, or present an employer's certification of skill mastery. When a student was asked about projects she might have completed

for credit during her stay with a dental hygienist, we were surprised when she replied, "That's my mouth over there"--and pointed to a large cardboard model of a mouth in the corner of the EBCE classroom, which was supposed to demonstrate what she had learned.[34] While written work such as papers, reports, and tests continued to dominate the evaluation process--making EBCE in this regard not so unlike traditional courses--the impact of competency-based education was apparent in EBCE programs.

More explicit, though, was the introduction of a "competencies" component to some of the EBCE programs. Competencies were defined by the developers as the minimum "survival skills" for adult life and were presented to students as different from academic or community experiences, although related to both:

> "The competencies are coping skills needed by all adults in the community . . . those tasks and transactions that all adults must routinely perform in their roles as citizens in a given community."[35]

The EBCE developers defined these competencies more clearly than some earlier advocates, specifying the skills and knowledge required and how mastery was to be demonstrated, and providing material to guide students and staff. EBCE competencies included such practical skills as maintaining a checking account, applying for a job, operating an automobile, and filling out a tax return.[36]

But although this component of EBCE represented another attempt to link school life with non-school life, it did not often provide the bridge that was envisioned. Most of the competencies--although newly packaged--were not really new to school in substance. True, they were not traditional high school subjects, and so did represent the infusion of new cognitive content into the curriculum; but many of them had been taught in school before--

although more often in such settings as driver education or business math. And although in theory attainment of the competencies usually involved "certification" of proficiency by community experts rather than teachers, the competencies were commonly treated as part of EBCE's in-school program. They were "taught" by EBCE staff, and their impact on a student's grades (if any) was ultimately determined by teachers. Rather than treating the competencies as something to be learned in the community and validated by non-school experts--as developers had planned--teachers more often assigned them like any other school assignment, and then assessed mastery in traditional ways. One teacher told us how she worked with her students to prepare them for tests on their competencies:

> "After students have prepared themselves to take the competency tests, they have a conversation with me about the issues on the test. If I think they're ready . . . then they take the test. I do this in order to help them clarify the test areas. Sometimes they get the information that they need but they don't always understand it. So I think of it as a way to help them clarify what they know, and it also serves as a review before the test."[37]

This teacher reported that with this approach, not many students fail the tests. In at least some cases, then, the competencies turned out to be yet another facet of the program which was carried out primarily in schools.

Moreover, traditional school concerns eviscerated the few attempts at competency-based education. Since it was neither academic nor experiential, it soon came to be viewed as an add-on to the central EBCE program. And when the demands of the new program became too great for students and teachers, as they quite often did, graduation requirements and traditional academic priorities usually prevailed. As a result, the competencies component eventually was either curtailed or dropped altogether from the EBCE agenda, except

in those states or locales where competencies had been mandated. In a particularly ambitious program which made every attempt to use the competency materials as the laboratory suggested, students were initially "required" to master all 12 competencies during the school year. But the staff quickly learned that with all the other activity the program generated, it was not feasible to expect students to manage the added layer, particularly without the cooperation of community people. So instead, community "certifiers" were brought into school, and all 40 students marched through one competency at a time--in a fairly traditional lock-step approach, as for the auto mechanics competency:

> "For example, the M.P.'s came in and the troopers were here and brought auto parts and set up stations where students could observe the various parts of the engines, and we had films and presentations and so on."[38]

Caught in the bind between heavy program demands and limited school time, the teachers were somewhat apologetic about reverting to familiar means of student management:

> "I guess we went back to the traditional classroom on [the competencies]--all the students are in the same place and begin together."[39]

The work in this case was mostly done alone or in small groups, as the students' packets were in the form of a "self-paced module" commonly found in competency-based education: pre-test, behavioral objectives, a series of activities with alternatives, and post-test. But even with this imaginative combination of the traditional and the innovative, the teachers reported when we visited the school in late spring that they were way behind schedule and probably wouldn't complete more than five or six competencies before the end of the year. "We don't really have to do all of them," the staff member in

charge admitted, adding that "we might shorten the others a little . . . I won't mind if we don't reach twelve, but that was our goal."[40]

It seems this goal was not met here and in other districts because other aspects of the program, especially those more in line with traditional school concerns, took precedence. The project director conceded the dominance of grading and crediting demands when she observed that the staff hadn't paid much attention to the competencies since "they're so snowed under with other things that get grades."[41] Here, too, academic priorities prevailed, diluting those program features not directly tied to the academic agenda.

Basic Skills and Remedial Instruction

In many locales, EBCE became at least in part a basic skills training program. This was in keeping with the spirit of the innovation, as its developers all stressed academic programs tailored to the needs of the individual. One laboratory, in fact, originally included a highly sophisticated individual math and language skills program as an essential component of its model. This may help to explain why the number of EBCE programs providing skills help for students was unexpectedly large.

Perhaps another reason for this was that teachers found many students to be in great need of remedial work before they could handle other aspects of the EBCE program, especially independent academic study and performance at the worksite. Teachers came to the program realizing that many of the students they had been teaching in, say, their history or science classes couldn't read or write satisfactorily. Moreover, the student population of many EBCE programs had histories of alienation, poor attendance, and weak academic records, and was thus acutely in need of cathing up with other stu-

dents. Not that the program was designed for students with problems in most cases; on the contrary, the developers stressed that it was for all students, and most local staffers told us they "wanted a cross-section of students."[42] But despite staff attempts to attract a group at least somewhat representative of the district population, many programs were viewed in the district as serving students with one kind of problem or another. The director in a district that started with "a truly representative cross-section" of the high school found that by the second year of program operation--either in spite of or because of advertising and open enrollment--the makeup was "more skewed to the lower end."[43] When asked whether there were not a lot of students in the program who were in some sort of trouble, a teacher answered with surprising frankness: "Yes, a lot more than we'd like to admit. That's because this is the only separate alternative program in the district."[44] Quite a few EBCE programs were designated as alternative or "innovative" programs, and that designation seems to connote troubled students to some school district personnel.

School counselors were key figures in determining program makeup, since in most districts they exerted some influence over recruitment or referral. And often, "they recommend problem students," in the words of an EBCE teacher.[45] Many counselors were of the opinion that students with academic and other problems should be in the program:

> "[The program] reached some low-ability students who might not have stayed in school otherwise. I definitely think that it is these students who really needed the opportunity to explore careers, and not the better type of students . . . "[46]

In a district where the program was universally perceived as an "alter-

native school"--the first such alternative the district ever had--the new facility quickly became a dumping ground of sorts. The counselors in the regular schools looked on it as a "school for problem kids," and referred students with a range of problems to EBCE: those with a history of learning problems, those with problems with attendance and authority, and in addition, those with a variety of personal problems.[47] In another district, the principal was quite explicit about EBCE's place in the local tracking process. In his school, about one third of the students were expected to go to four-year colleges, another third to junior colleges, and the remainder straight to the work force. EBCE was mainly geared for the one third continuing on to work, in hopes that it would prepare them for finding and holding jobs. As sophomores, these "terminal career education" students had several choices in this school: business education; agricultural education; industrial arts--or EBCE. The guidance counselors were expected to recruit and select students for the program.[48]

Not all EBCE student populations were skewed toward the troubled or low-ability end of the spectrum. Indeed, some programs even turned their attention in the other direction, toward students who exhibited "maturity and responsibility" and had a "good track record in school," in an attempt to eliminate, in the words of one administrator, the "high risk applicants."[49] And of course, many programs labored to maintain a representative group. But often the group was as described by this student:

> "There aren't too many As and Bs in here. They probably all had Cs and Ds before."[50]

Although most teachers had problems dealing with so many poor students, their dilemma was usually that they recognized how helpful the program could be for

these students, even as they complained about not having a better balance. As one EBCE teacher put it:

> "The trouble is that the program does work with these kids, and is effective with the group we serve. But we need to show [the counselors] that it can work with other kids as well."[51]

One reasons the program worked for this group was that it facilitated an emphasis on basic skills. In the typical classroom setting, even the best teachers are quite helpless to remedy reading and writing deficiencies; in EBCE, they had the flexibility to attack these needs systematically. Although teaching loads were comparable, the student to teacher ratio was usually much lower in EBCE than in regular school, so that teachers could better stress and monitor the progress of fewer students. The fact that most of the program material--not just the academic material--was designed for individual or small-group use also made it easier for teachers to track student progress in skill areas. And in programs that seemed to attract "problem" students, for whatever reason, EBCE could so arrange things that some students spent most of the school week doing remedial basic skills work in such areas as arithmetic, grammar, and reading comprehension. For them, more advanced subjects were to be worked up to, and community exploration was a rare treat. In some programs students worked independently, using individual and self-paced material. In other districts, they used traditional textbooks and exercises, working alone or in small groups with plenty of teacher supervision.

Again, external influences contributed to the emphasis on basic skills. EBCE coincided with a general "back-to-basics" swing, a shift in community attitudes that probably encouraged staff to focus their efforts on basic skills training. The need to address a perceived skills gap was so great

in some EBCE districts that program staff often went beyond the laboratory material to find skills texts and teaching aids. In fact, several programs implementing models that did not provide basic skills material bought the individualized language and math kit from the laboratory that had developed such a component.

By and large, students seemed to welcome the opportunity to do remedial work in a relatively non-judgmental atmosphere, i.e., in other than a "remedial reading" program. It removed them from classes that had been a setting for academic failure and embarrassment in their lives. They found that the instruction in EBCE helped them to learn math and language--and to like school better as a result. EBCE thus served a useful purpose for many students who were below average in skill attainment: it freed them from the constraints of classroom instruction while offering them the academic rewards that could not be provided within the schools' standard setting.

But while students seemed to profit from EBCE's remedial academic programs, these activities were unrelated to out-of-school experience. Indeed, of all academic work the basic skills were least likely to be integrated with work experience. So when EBCE was primarily a basic skills program, it was even more likely to be a reform that was primarily based in school.

School Structure and Curriculum Reform

Why is it that the hoped-for integration of work experience and academics rarely occurred as hoped? Why did learning in the workplace rarely mesh with learning in school? We think that one answer lies in the separation of school from community, and especially in certain structural features of contemporary secondary education that serve to keep the two spheres apart.

Another answer concerns the inability of educators to use informal ad hoc experience as a device to stimulate and develop complex thought. Unlike the formal academic curriculum, which has been developed to guide this process, informal experience lacks the structure and regularity necessary to use it for this purpose. Occurring spontaneously as it does, it evades use as a vehicle for guiding intellectual or cognitive development. And the American high school has characteristics that impede the intrustion of unstructured, non-academic experience: the departmental make-up of the high school, specialized professional training and certification of its teachers, and student credentialing procedures. Each of these makes high schools less permeable to such external influences as work experience.

Departmentalization of the Curriculum

EBCE and similar programs would bring work and the various disciplines together in a unified manner for each student, by cutting across academic subjects to develop interdisciplinary, individual student programs. The idea was that if the academic disciplines were integrated with one another, they could in turn be better integrated with experience. But curriculum departmentalization has become such an essential feature of school organization that in most high schools interdisciplinary and cross-curricular study was frustrated.

There was some loosening of the structure in that EBCE student work frequently crossed curriculum boundaries as it was supposed to. Teachers often considered the projects and papers completed by students as multi-disciplinary and gave credit in more than one subject. An EBCE teacher explained that student project activities were often viewed as appropriate for a variety of academic subjects, depending on the subject matter

mix of the project:

> "The credits for the project might be divided between English composition and history or biology, depending on the content of the report. On the other hand, one project could produce a quarter credit, or [it] could be used to produce a full credit divided perhaps between a quarter credit in biology, a half credit in photography, and a quarter credit in English."[52]

This kind of cross-departmental subject mixing was more common in full-time programs than in part-time arrangements, where students took some or all of their academic subjects with other teachers. Indeed, a few EBCE teachers and students had remarkable freedom to rearrange the curriculum, so much so that a student boasted, "I can do whatever I want to get my points." He was earning both English and social studies credit for a project, and explained that if he did some extra work on the same project he could "earn some extra points to put onto science or anything else I failed last year."[53]

EBCE crossed departmental boundaries in other ways not commonly found in the traditional high school. Teachers themselves often stepped over the lines, as staff who were certified in one subject area taught two or three other subjects in self-contained EBCE programs. In addition, teachers not officially considered EBCE staff often served as instructors or tutors, as in the case of a business teacher who taught accounting to an EBCE student as an after-school independent study.[54] Cross-departmental changes like these occurred to some degree in most sites we studied.

But even where such breakthroughs occurred, there remained obstacles to creating a cross-disciplinary curriculum. We observed strong resistance to EBCE in some faculties, and it was often of a departmental nature. In some schools, the heads of certain academic departments openly opposed EBCE, and they and their faculty made the going rough for the new program. One

of the chief reasons for this opposition was an awareness of declining enrollments, and the accompanying fear of staff cuts. Established departments in high schools thus saw new EBCE programs as a threat to departmental stability and job security.

Although all departments suffered in districts with declining enrollments, English faculties seemed to fear the resulting cuts the most--and were often the strongest opponents of EBCE. This was because in many schools, elective courses in English--and thus department staff size--had mushroomed in the past ten or fifteen years, students could choose anything from Sports Stories to Whodunits as electives that provided credits toward graduation. But declining enrollments meant fewer students to sign up for these courses. EBCE and programs of its type were an additional anxiety, since they competed for the diminishing student population needed to fill courses and maintain staff. Students signing up for EBCE (and perhaps an EBCE English course taught by a program staff member) were not likely to sign up for English electives as well. In the eyes of some teachers, EBCE was thus a serious threat.

Faculty in other departments could be just as protective of their turf and the "bodies" they controlled. A business teacher reported that members of his department were upset about the projected growth of their school's EBCE program:

> "Some teachers are concerned because [EBCE is] cutting into their classroom enrollment. They started with twenty-two students [in EBCE] and now we hear in the teachers' room that it's going up to fifty. That's a pretty big chunk of students to pull out of the regular classroom."[55]

In this small school, the business faculty had caluculated that if the EBCE program in fact did expand to fifty full-time students, their business course enrollment would drop sufficiently that they would lose one staff position. In the same school, the math teachers were also worried:

> "I've heard this sort of discussion in the teachers' room. You take fifty kids out of the math program, and we're going to be down. It's more than an idle fear. It could mean something."[56]

In schools where non-EBCE faculty perceived the new program as endangering job security, teachers were not without their devices to frustrate EBCE ambitions and diminish the chances for program success. Recruitment of students for courses--something unheard of just a few years ago--became a major annual campaign. Teachers engaged in public relations for their own programs, and as they dealt with many students daily, had a competitive advantage over EBCE in recruitment. And in at least some cases, students were actively and overtly discouraged from enrolling in EBCE.

Most important for the curriculum reform effort, EBCE staff often had trouble eliciting any significant cooperation from teachers in competing academic departments. The amount of interdepartmental cooperation varied from school to school, and even from department to department, but some EBCE staff reported feeling totally shut out by certain departments. While large programs with numerous EBCE teachers--usually representing a range of departmental backgrounds--could manage sufficiently well without interdepartmental interaction, such isolation could spell disaster for small programs. A program with only one teacher and fifteen students, for example, often needed the cooperation of other faculties in providing credits in all

academic areas, or face lowering its program aspirations by relinquishing an interdisciplinary approach. And faculty resistance caused the latter reaction in some cases: students were required to enroll in regular English (or science, or social studies, or math) courses to gain needed credit. Without interdepartmental cooperation, EBCE often became more a part-time work-experience program and less a curriculum reform.

Professional Specialization

A second structural feature hindering work-related curriculum reform was professional specialization, especially discipline-specific training and certification. EBCE teachers, like most American high school teachers, were trained to teach one or two subjects, and were certified by their state licensing agencies to teach only in these academic areas. But the innovation required that EBCE teachers become generalists as part of the curriculum reform. They had to be able to integrate all the site experiences of each student with whatever academic subjects might be related to those experiences, and vice versa.

For a teacher trained as a specialist, such a comprehensive overview is not easily gained. An EBCE teacher who had taught science in the regular high school, for example, might be able to link a student's two-week site experience at an aircraft factory to the physics of motion, but would have difficulty relating it to social studies. A student reported that her EBCE teacher, trained in the teaching of English, ran into trouble when she tried to teach geometry:

> "Sometimes [she] didn't understand some of the problems herself, and we would have to see the regular geometry teacher."[57]

In programs where professional specialization became a problem, the EBCE teachers themselves were usually the first to recognize it. They often worked many extra hours studying teacher manuals in alien subjects, but rarely felt confident or competent in the new disciplines. One learning manager told us of the frustration of teaching a foreign subject: "All I studied in school was English--I don't know anything about psychology."[58]

Many programs anticipated such problems, and hired teachers from different disciplines to staff EBCE; but in the individual project approach--the chief means for fusing work with academics--the actual integration of assignments and activities was usually left up to one teacher working alone with his or her individual students. Other staff were called in only for occasional consultation. This was a significant pedagogical process change, favored by both students and staff, but it meant that professional specialization remained an obstacle in EBCE programs because few staff were generalists. Many EBCE administrators and staff were concerned about this structural weakness of the program, and sought to involve other teachers--whether EBCE staff or regular teachers--in the planning of student projects and activities. Some even went so far as the administrator who eliminated the academic component of EBCE because of his doubts about the ability of a small program staff to manage it.

> "I describe EBCE as an elective, rather than as a true alternative program. The kids take their academic requirements in the regular class. The reason is that we don't know if we in EBCE can teach as much English as can the teachers in a regular class."[59]

But even where faculty were willing to help EBCE teachers, or where the EBCE staff was large enough to represent several disciplines, cross-disciplinary

collaboration was usually quite unmanageable. As a result, curriculum planning for all subjects was in many instances left in the hands of a specialist in one academic area.

Professionalization affected EBCE in other ways besides limiting the effectiveness of the program's academic curriculum. The resistance of non-EBCE faculty to the innovation might be explained in large part by competition for students, as described above, but another source of opposition was "professional territoriality." Many teachers feel that academic training and licensing are the best indicators of professional competence to teach, and failing such credentials, competence is called into question. In the case of EBCE, we observed widespread concern over the lack of certification (and the assumed concomitant lack of competence) of some EBCE staff to teach subjects in which they were working with students. Non-EBCE teachers often resisted the notion that programs of this type should be exempted from teacher certification regulations--as they were in many locales.

These territorial concerns were manifest in a variety of ways, chief among them being criticism of the quality of academic work in EBCE. An English teacher's remarks are representative of many faculty comments about EBCE:

> "The thing that concerns me most is that students get academic credit for work that I don't think would pass muster with teachers in the regular program. I've seen a couple of papers and have said, 'Do students get English credit for this?' The students are good; they can do good work, but I don't think some of the stuff they do would be satisfactory in my courses."[60]

While concerns of this type are hard to separate from the concerns over job security voiced earlier (and were often expressed back-to-back by the same

teachers), the professional turf-guarding implicit in this stance helps to explain some faculty behavior we observed, including open resistance to programs, discouraging students from enrolling, and refusal to cooperate with EBCE staff.

In response to attacks of this type, EBCE staff frequently communicated less with regular faculty than they had intended, and so cut themselves off from needed help, and the program from the mainstream of the school. A project director felt that awarding English credit was potentially an area of conflict in his school, where an "extremely conservative" faculty had expressed its intentions of "upgrading" their English curriculum. Because of this attitude of the teachers, he said he tried to "play down giving regular course credit for basic subjects"--especially English.[61] As a result, there was little dialogue with the regular faculty, and no cooperation or assistance.

Student Credentialing

A third feature that tended to obstruct the integration of experience with academic learning was the student credentialing process in most high schools. EBCE was in a way an effort to accord experience-based learning equal status with traditional academic programs. Since formal grades and credits toward a high school diploma are the chief instruments of legitimacy in schools, EBCE proposed that grading and crediting practices be altered so as to recognize the non-traditional character of the program. The formal cognitive curriculum, i.e., the course of study approved for credit, would thus be altered. But standard academic requirements generally prevailed.

For some years, many districts have awarded course credit for work-study or other programs involving the community or workplace, but EBCE proposed something new. It sought to have grades awarded and credit given in the academic disciplines for experiential, non-school learning which could be demonstrated in a wide range of ways. It also proposed explicitly upgrading the importance of social skills and behavior--such as attendance, punctuality, and so on--in assigning credits, and to reduce the role of tests as indicators of subject mastery. EBCE advocated several other grading and crediting changes. It proposed new categories for formal grading and crediting, such as "career exploration," "survival skills," "self-awareness," and "knowledge about career and work," which would be recorded on student transcripts. It proposed flexible crediting for student work, such that one community activity or one product might yield credit in more than one subject area. And it sought to legitimize the grading and crediting of student work in traditional academic areas by EBCE staff who were not necessarily certified in those areas. These proposals were more revolutionary in some districts than in others, which had already become more flexible and diverse in recent years, and thus met with different combinations of support and resistance.

Many changes were indeed wrought by EBCE: students got credit in new categories not formerly included in transcripts, and flexible crediting was the rule rather than the exception. In some districts, EBCE enabled students to earn credit for virtually anything they would like to learn or explore, from skiing to sewing, and from letter-writing to learning the family business. These credits were often awarded in academic subjects. For example,

a student might receive American history grades and credits, and satisfy graduation requirements, by completing a project on the role of the buffalo in American history, or on the history of the National Forest Service. But as that student might not have read the school history text, the content of the history for which credit was given differed substantially from that required in the regular school program. EBCE thus produced grades and credits for work in the academic disciplines--but the content was often defined very differently.

While flexible crediting was common in most EBCE programs, it worked differently in different districts. One program director described the procedures used in her program:

> "The staff goes through the projects at the end of the term and decides in what area the grade and credit can be given. Thus, one project can produce credits and grades in different subjects. Students do 3 to 7 credits per term. Each project is worth 5 credits, and we've designed them such that they require about 50 hours--the amount of time spent in regular class for the same amount of credit. Students also get credits for their journals and for attending the seminars. These come under 'EBCE,' which is an elective on their transcript."[62]

Flexible crediting--or crediting of any kind--was generally not done for work in the community, although some students received credit for time spent there. When asked about the assignment of credits for site work, one superintendent replied, "We haven't faced that yet."[63] In his district, students were rated satisfactory or unsatisfactory in their work performance, but received no Carnegie units. When asked whether students could drop any regular academic courses to take part in EBCE, the superintendent replied, "No; they must carry a full Carnegie unit load or plan to make up credits they miss."[64] In effect, then, EBCE was supplemental in this district.

New arrangements for the granting of grades and credits were thus widespread in EBCE. But the evaluation of student work is so fundamental to the educational process, and is such an important symbol of the schools' commitment to equity and merit, that the altering of grading and crediting practices was a sensitive issue in nearly all the districts we studied. As a result, traditional concerns tended to dominate, and diploma requirements, grades and credits virtually always took precedence over the jobs and careers students wished to experience. Moreover, the revised curriculum was rarely tied closely to work. Rather than work experiences influencing curriculum content, more often credit concerns determined the types of out-of-school experiences available to students. Since diploma requirements were never waived for EBCE students, EBCE staff paid close attention to student progress in accumulating the necessary credits in selecting site placements and student projects; and grades were more often given for papers and projects submitted to the teacher than for site experiences themselves--though the product might have been stimulated by the work. While grading and crediting practices were indeed somewhat loosened up by EBCE, in the main the innovation was forced to adapt to the standard requirements of the school district. Rather than reforming the curriculum, EBCE was reformed by the school.

Conclusion

EBCE was intended to be a curriculum reform based on work. The idea was to alter both the content and the processes of secondary education by introducing experiential or informed knowledge into the high school curriculum--especially knowledge derived from the world of work. The work

activities associated with adult life would thus reshape and reform the academic curriculum.

But most of the reform activity introduced by EBCE involved changes in the ways teaching and learning were arranged in schools. And it involved a renewed emphasis on those aspects of the traditional curriculum which were considered essential for adult life. Thus, EBCE made great strides in many schools toward individualizing instruction and strengthening work in basic skills. And it diversified the curriculum by providing a new program option. But it did not reform the academic curriculum with work; rather, it added work to the curriculum, sometimes superseding traditional courses and sometimes expanding them. The hoped-for fusion of experiential and academic learning thus failed to materialize.

In part this was due to the traditional organization and structure of the American high school. Professional educators have a clearly defined niche to occupy; they are trained as specialists in the scholastic realm, and few are eager or feel competent to bring experience from other sectors of life into their subject areas. The departmentalized curriculum, teacher training and certification requirements, and student credentialing procedures requiring a fixed distribution of courses further serve to discourage the admixture of qualitatively different subject matter. Just as many believe that barriers separate the school from the community, there are walls within schools--traditional interests and arrangements that inhibit the introduction of nondisciplinary study.

The second impediment was the inherent difficulty of using "real experience" to stimulate complex thinking skills. The primary purpose of the academic curriculum is to awaken and develop these skills, using course content such as history or math as the vehicle. Echoing John Dewey, EBCE advocates had argued that this would occur in EBCE, that experience would motivate students and stimulate their thought. But the work experiences available to EBCE students need not--and often cannot--involve issues suited to complex intellectual investigation. Students acquired simple information about work--what some jobs involve and what they pay--and discovered their attitudes toward it--how well they liked different work settings and the tasks involved. But that learning was superficial, diffuse, and without intellectual focus; it could do little to develop their reasoning skills.

The character of the school and the slight involvement of community adults did little to encourage the desired fusion of learning in the workplace and academic learning. But in our view, if in EBCE the two rarely meshed as desired, it was mainly because they are in some sense incompatible. Can spontaneous experience be used to develop critical thinking? Can an educator--or an employer--distill central lessons or concepts from it so as to help students make the leap from experience to critical reflection? Can experience be merged with the non-experiential curriculum--without introducing a formal curriculum on work, which would be self-defeating? How--and indeed whether--formal learning can accrue from informal experience is an issue that has puzzled experiential educators for generations, and like its predecessors EBCE failed to find the solution.

Footnotes to Chapter III

1. Resource Specialist, 2/78.
2. EBCE teacher, 2/78.
3. EBCE teacher, 3/77.
4. EBCE student, 2/78.
5. EBCE student, 2/78.
6. EBCE student, 3/78.
7. Learning Coordinator, 4/78.
8. Ibid.
9. Learning Manager, 4/78.
10. EBCE student, 1/78.
11. EBCE student, 1/78.
12. EBCE student, 1/78.
13. Learning Coordinator, 3/78.
14. Learning Coordinator, 3/78.
15. EBCE teacher, 12/77.
16. Ibid.
17. Learning Manager, 4/78.
18. Learning Manager, 4/78.
19. Learning Coordinator, 3/78.
20. Former EBCE student, 4/78.
21. EBCE student, 4/78.
22. EBCE teacher, 4/78.
23. Learning Coordinator, 3/78.
24. EBCE Career Development Counselor, 1/78.

25. Learning Coordinator, 3/77.

26. Teacher Coordinator, 5/78.

27. Learning Coordinator, 5/78.

28. EBCE student, 5/78.

29. EBCE student, 3/77.

30. EBCE student, 2/78.

31. EBCE student, 4/78.

32. Non-EBCE teacher, 4/77.

33. Block, J., "The 'C' in CBE," Educational Researcher, Vol. 7, No. 5, May 1978, pp. 13-16.

34. EBCE student, 2/78.

35. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Student Competencies Staff Guide, 1975, p. 5.

36. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

37. Resource Specialist, 4/78.

38. Student Activity Specialist, 5/78.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Project Director, 5/78.

42. Project Director, 12/76.

43. Project Director, 3/78.

44. EBCE teacher, 3/78.

45. Learning Manager, 4/78.

46. School Counselor, 4/78.

47. Huron Staff, 3/78.

48. Principal, 1/78.

49. Project Director, 12/76.
50. EBCE student, 3/78.
51. Learning Manager, 3/78.
52. Learning Manager, 3/77.
53. EBCE student, 4/78.
54. Non-EBCE teacher, 4/77.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Former EBCE student, 4/78.
58. Learning Manager, 4/78.
59. Project Director, 4/78.
60. Non-EBCE teacher, 3/77.
61. Project Director, 3/78.
62. Project Director, 4/78.
63. Superintendent, 12/76.
64. Ibid.

IV. STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN THE COMMUNITY

Student experiences in EBCE were to differ from those in traditional school in several ways. One significant way this was to occur was by having students spend time in the community and to learn from their experiences and exposure to different jobs and careers. In this new role for students, they were to be under the supervision of adults in the community, whose task would include teaching them about work, and helping them to adopt successful work attitudes and behavior. By being with adults in sites they had selected, students were expected to learn many varied lessons including the utility of academic knowledge; the multidisciplinary nature of issues in real life situations; the compability of different kinds of work with their personal interests and aptitudes; whether they liked practicing the skills involved and what type of work would be a suitable choice for their adult lives.

EBCE provided a wide range of these extra-school experiences for students--experiences that for the most part other students in the high school did not have. Through local networks of "community resource sites," students visited an array of workplaces, explored a range of occupations, and performed diverse tasks. What follows is an effort to describe and to discuss some of these community experiences. We discuss some of the limits of those experiences, some ways students found this aspect of the program helpful, and finally, the role employers played in providing students with community experiences.

Some Limits of Work Experience

Student experiences in the community varied across individuals and

programs. Some students clearly benefited more than others. But however much a student benefited, there were some common limitations built into their school/work relationship. These limitations included: constraints of time, number of sites, and types of activity available. To begin with, most students had no continuous long-term exposure to the workplace. The time actually spent in the community was generally limited to a few hours a day or a few days per semester. Thirteen weeks at one site was the maximum programs could permit because of a Department of Labor ruling on the Fair Labor Standards Act. But typically employers were not willing to have students spend even that much time. Students in half of all EBCE programs spent less than twenty hours on one work site, and in one fourth, less than ten hours. The mean number of hours per site across all programs was forty, or the equivalent of two school weeks per semester.[1] A complicating factor was the chopped-up site visit schedule of many students. Because of required attendance at some school classes (usually academic subjects needed for graduation), most students were forced to spend small parts of several days in the community, rather than, say, one entire day per week. With these time constraints, students were hard pressed to obtain an overview of work rules, working operations, or the culture of the workplace.

In many programs, the limited time in a given site was compounded by the limited number of sites available for students exploration. From the outset, most programs had not been blessed with an abundance of community sites from which to choose. While EBCE averaged about 125 work sites per program,[2] the large number of students in many programs resulted in a mean of two sites per student. One fourth of all the EBCE programs reported fewer sites than students, and another quarter had only one or two available

for each student. But even in the half of the program where site availability was limited, students were able to experience some diversity by rotating from one site to another. This created other problems, however, because program staff arranged their rotation and students were told to attend or leave a site regardless of whether they wanted to or not. Student choice was thereby limited.

Student choice in these and other sites was also limited by the logistics of scheduling and transporting students. Some placements accepted students only at certain times of the day or week, so that regular classes or extra-curricular school activities prohibited attendance by some of the program population. And distance or lack of access to public transportation removed some sites as possibilities for other students. This was especially the case in suburban and rural areas where private transportation was required. Although most students without access to cars avoided the program, those who did enroll found their site choices quite restricted. Both the number of sites and the amount of time on site thus curtailed EBCE students' exposure to community experiences.

Moreover, the level of skill and knowledge required for many of the more interesting activities at work sites was often beyond that of most students. While on site, then, students spent about half their time observing work activities and listening to lectures. The rest of their time was usually spent in some form of "hands-on" experiences, but students often found their placements not as exciting or integral to the life of the workplace as they had anticipated. For example, a student placed at a local police station complained that she spent her time

> "listening to cases, reading books, and talking to [the sergeant]. I found out that listening to cases involved

> people coming in and talking about things with police officers about something that had happened to them, or a complaint that they wanted to register." She said that sometimes she was able to go outside the station with the Sergeant and listen to complaints and situations out there.[3]

Another student grumbled about his placement at a pizza parlor:

> "I was kitchen help and mainly washed the dishes." Asked what else he had done, he said that he had "scrubbed the floor, carried the pots, and made sandwiches there." He also . . . did a lot of eating there, as they were allowed a free lunch.[4]

Students such as these, while resigned to their assignments, often complained about being bored. As one student explained:

> "I was assigned to a commercial bank and loan department, where all they had me do was pull up a chair and watch all day. It was really boring, and I hated it." I asked whether that happened very often, and he said, "It happens often enough, but not all the time."[5]

A typical response on the part of the students was to blame their employer resource "for having the wrong idea," as did one student who spent his time sweeping floors in a laundry.[6] Others just saw their site as inherently uninteresting as did one student who was placed at a fire department:

> "I mostly hung around because there were no calls or anything" and looked at the firemen do "not a hell of a lot . . . . Lots of them study for their tests. And if they're not doing that, they're sleeping." He then remembered that one other thing he did . . . was learn some first aid from one of the firemen.[7]

Despite student reports of boredom or inactivity on sites, their experiences could be seen as instructive of the real world of work. Students, for example, could form conclusions about particular jobs and careers or about the nature of work in general. But while some students did this, many showed few signs of reflecting on their experiences in any more than an immediate way. They were typically more concerned with other matters, such as finding another site which promised more excitement or completing their written projects on their work experiences.

To a large extent, student reactions to their site experiences could be explained by the discrepancy between what they expected to do on site and what they usually ended up doing. For example, one student who sought and received a placement at a museum told this story:

> "It's sorta funny, but I usually came and worked with the gardener . . . ." He spent his time "dusting off plants, watering grass and plants, and taking dead flowers off plants." Asked what he had done most of the time, he said that it was digging holes for plants with the gardener.[8]

Another student, interested in medical insurance because she planned to be a nurse, spent her time in an insurance company typing with the secretaries.[9] And one placed in a legal aid association explained that all she did was "go to court, read reports, run errands for people; I also did some typing and they showed me how to run the xerox machine."[10] Another student, who was interested in becoming a veterinarian and had asked to be placed at an animal hospital, was disappointed with her experience:

> "I would go in and out and get animals from their cages." She also "got to fill medicine bottles and . . . set up stool samples . . . ." Mostly, she . . . spent her time getting the animals and "cleaning up after operations." She said that the vet hospital really didn't need her "to do much stuff there, and I waited around a lot."[11]

While digging holes for plants, typing, xeroxing, and cleaning and caring for animals did provide certain forms of learning, students did not find them very meaningful or instructive. This did not mean that they potentially could not have been, but that students, given their expectations, did not experience them as such. Given the choice, students were more inclined to maintain their initial expectations and see their own brief experiences in jobs and careers as inauthentic and artificial.

In part, students had these experiences because of a divergence between their own and employer expectations. For the most part, employers

expected students to learn about work by being there--what students did was not that important. But students, for whatever reasons, expected much more than the roles they found themselves in. As a result, they were disappointed and did not learn as much as they might have.

Students' Uses of the School-and-Work Program

Curiously, though many students complained about their site experiences, these same students were virtually unanimous in their praise of the program. Regardless of past academic successes or failures, and of their past satisfaction with life in school and its social activities, EBCE students nearly always preferred the program to the traditional school tracks and courses. Moreover, they usually expressed disappointment with the community-based aspect of the program side by side with statements that it was this aspect they most liked about EBCE.

In our view, the reason for this enthusiasm lies in the uses that students made of the work program--uses not always predicted by the developers, but often consistent with the spirit of the innovation. The potential of the program went beyond its publicly proclaimed agenda of providing alternative ways to learn about careers while pursuing academic learning. Students quickly found that the flexibility built into EBCE to make program goals attainable allowed them to interpret it in ways that made sense to them. Students thus often took one or more of the central EBCE themes and improvised on them so as to meet their needs and desires.

What were some of the uses of EBCE resulting from these improvisations? Students used it as an escape from school, whether merely to avoid its boredom and routine or to pursue previously established interests; as a chance to lay the groundwork for higher education or adult employment; as a sanctuary at a time of personal crisis.

Escape from School

EBCE provided an escape from much of what young people don't like about school. Virtually every EBCE student we met seized on the out-of-school potential of EBCE, attracted to its novelty and the break in routine that it offered. Although translated into quite different opportunities by different students, the use of EBCE to gain freedom from the constraints of school was universal. Students with widely varying academic records and goals reported that escape from the daily grind was the main reason they liked EBCE. Whatever the quality of their work experiences, their likes and dislikes among the school staff, and their interest in courses and projects undertaken, students preferred EBCE to regular classroom study because it interrupted the routine of daily class attendance and provided occasions for getting out of school and into novel settings and new experiences.

Pursuit of Personal Interests

Escape from school was also a way of devoting more time to personal or career interests. Many students expressed a desire to participate in activities not usually open to them.

> "I want to be able to do what I want to do, whether it's in school or not, and . . . to participate in a lot of things outside of school which I couldn't do . . . in the regular curriculum."[12]

For a few, this meant pursuing career interests that were already fairly well defined; they wanted to be allowed to "grow up" in a hurry, to engage in occupational activities of the chosen field while still completing school requirements. An academically gifted small-town high school junior who planned to "major in communications in college" was considering

"on-camera and on-mike work on TV and radio."[13] He joined EBCE to secure placements in local radio and TV stations, and within months had his own radio sports talk show. He went on to college in broadcast journalism, and reported that his EBCE experience was an invaluable prerequisite for his job at the campus radio station. Another student who "wanted to be an actor" but was tired of student productions and "bored and about to drop out" of school used EBCE to get a placement at a local repertory theater. For three months, he spent four hours a day "working with actors, going to [acting] classes, and studying self-expression," as well as working backstage on sets and props.[14] Similarly, a senior with a longstanding interest in dance worked out such a flexible schedule through EBCE that she managed to arrange daily ballet training during school hours.

For other students, the chance to spend more time out of school meant personal gain. Though EBCE site work was without pay, a student released from the rules by EBCE could work more hours at a part-time job. One boy who ran his own rabbit-breeding business on the side reported that the program "has given me the time to learn about the business--to learn about experimental breeding, about the different varieties and how to care for rabbits."[15] This enterprising young man was able to earn both academic credit and increased profit through his participation in EBCE.

Planning for the Future

In a number of cases (sometimes involving the same students), EBCE was consciously used to lay the groundwork for higher education or later employment. Students with an eye to the future used EBCE site placements for expanding personal networks and making contacts that might be helpful after high school. An academically successful black student in a Southern

city had developed an interest in a career in business and law, but had no contacts with that world. There were no professionals in his family or circle of friends. He joined EBCE "as an opportunity to see something that he couldn't see otherwise," and secured a placement at a top law firm.[16] His work with the attorneys so impressed them that they gave him glowing recommendations for college. Two years later, he was in a pre-law program at a prestigious university, spending his summers working at the law firm--and had been promised further support in applying for admission to their Ivy League alma maters.[17] In another case, a father who had worked his way up through the local electric company for 22 years to become a control-room operator confided that he hoped for a more fulfilling career for his son. He viewed EBCE as something that might give the boy "a leg up" by exposing him to area employers.[18]

Employment Agency

Along similar lines, students often perceived--and used--EBCE as a school-based employment agency. They enrolled in the program primarily for the placement services it provided, and often treated unpaid work experiences as an entry into scarce employment. This use of the program was prevalent among students who seemingly were in need of both gainful employment and a network for obtaining it. Although EBCE work placements as a rule did not involve pay, many students were able to parlay placements into paid employment--which in some districts helped to explain long waiting lists for enrollment. For example, a girl in a Northwestern suburb worked at a clothing store without pay from noon until 2:00 p.m. daily, but then stayed on to do the same work until 5:00 p.m. at minimum wage. Another girl, who was interested in becoming a teacher, nonetheless chose to stay

at a tropical fish store, although a placement at an elementary school was available. When asked why, she replied: "I really like this place--because I may be able to get a job there this summer."[19]

High school seniors whose formal education seemed likely to terminate at graduation were often actively looking for "a good job" for after high school. A young man who came to EBCE with aspirations to become an airline pilot learned through his first placement at an aviation service that his poor eyesight would make that impossible. He settled for several placements related to aviation, including a small travel agency, where he began by writing tickets and planning itineraries. The owner liked his work and upon graduation from high school asked him to join her staff full time. When we visited this town a year later, the former EBCE student was in charge of the agency's charter business, and a key employee of the firm.[20]

A Haven

For another group of students, EBCE provided a haven at a time of uncertainty, confusion, and chaos in their lives. EBCE functioned as a constructive diversion and as an academic and social sanctuary for these students. It enabled them to pursue new endeavors that were personally satisfying, find new sources of emotional support, and find new ways of earning academic credit.

For example, in one district, a junior with a troubled home life became involved with the local Red Cross; and according to her and her teachers, she started putting more energy into the Red Cross than worrying about her home life. Some months after joining the Red Cross, she designed and conducted her own program to train aspiring babysitters[21] and according to staff seemed much more in control of her own life. Other students also

talked about the emotional support and sense of community they were to find through EBCE, and did not find in regular schools. This emotional support, one girl reported, helped her deal with the divorce of her parents.[22] In other instances, it helped students who had serious academic problems and who considered dropping out of school. EBCE gave them the opportunity to earn credit in ways other than traditional coursework--and this may have helped to keep them officially enrolled and en route to a diploma.

The Participation of Employers in EBCE

Of course, students' experiences in the community, both good and bad, had much to do with employer attitudes and roles. And their roles and attitudes, we believe, can be explained in good measure by why employers chose to become involved in EBCE. Like other program participants--district administrators, teachers, and students--employers, too, had varied intentions and aspirations for EBCE. Their motives, like those of the other participants, influenced their interpretation of the program and accordingly the work experiences they provided.

Some had purely practical aims: they saw an opportunity to screen or train older students for future employment, or to obtain free help. Others joined to enhance the company's local image, or to correct what they thought to be teen-agers' mistaken impressions of some jobs and professions. Some employers participated because they liked the prospect of working with teen-agers, and some because they wanted to teach. And some joined to provide a public service to the schools or to correct what they considered an overly academic emphasis in the curriculum. Like teachers, they found their participation in the program constrained: by the demands of work, which were not diminished by the presence of students;

by uncertainty about how to teach students, and how much responsibility they could assume; and by the often perverse and uncooperative attitudes of students, which presented an unexpected complication to an already complex and difficult task. EBCE was thus both a challenge and a problem for many employers, and their responses helped to shape the work experiences that students found available. But in most instances, the stage was set for these experiences by employers' initial motives for joining.

A postmaster in a medium-sized town explained his interest in EBCE by his recent difficulties in recruiting good workers. He hoped that students who explored work in the post office would learn more about the postal service, consider it a possible occupation after high school, and carry the good news to others.

> "We do have recruitment problems at times. I figure if I indoctrinate 50 [EBCE students] at a time, they'll tell a lot more about the work here. We don't get the right kind of [applicants]. We don't get enough women or minorities to apply, for one thing. You have girls who see carriers, and so they think it's a man's job. And they don't know enough about the job, and they don't realize how well it pays, so they're not interested . . . . I wanted to educate people as to what the postal service is all about."[23]

Having these students in the post office for several hours a week over six weeks also gave his department supervisors a chance to observe those high school juniors and seniors who had expressed interest in applying for jobs in the postal service.

> "We have done no hiring yet, but at least three [EBCE students] took the postal service test and are on our lists now. I don't know if they'll take the jobs if they're offered, and there aren't any openings now. But they have expressed interest."[24]

In these instances, where the employer had a stake in interesting able students, we observed a tendency to give students "real work" to do, and

their performance was supervised and informally evaluated, even when the evaluation was not sent to school.

Like the postmaster, the director of a state-supported elementary school for handicapped children became involved with EBCE students in order to encourage students apparently interested in his field. But, in addition, he was also looking for day-to-day classroom assistance. His teachers and teaching aides had come to rely on community volunteers to supplement their efforts, and welcomed EBCE students into the classrooms as members of their "volunteer" program. According to this school director, "Student volunteers can be helpful in a classroom, but only if they have adequate training." Asked whether there was a financial payoff for the time he invested in training students, he replied, "Definitely so. With the proper preparation, a student can be a working part of the classroom . . . . They start out as a supportive person, and most of them will assume a teaching role with the kids while they are here."[25] When, as in this case, students could play a useful role by relieving or assisting regular employees, some training and supervision was almost always available.

A flower shop owner had long-term staff needs that he hoped EBCE might resolve. Four flower arrangers who had been working in his shop for many years were all in their 50s and 60s and approaching retirement. Although the owner operated a successful small business, he was increasingly concerned that young people seemed uninterested in that kind of work as a career. Through EBCE, he wanted to expose high school students to the work, and perhaps interest some of them in making a life of it.[26] When we visited the shop, a young woman who had been there for several months as part of her EBCE field work told us that she was so pleased with flower arranging

that she was considering staying on there after high school.[27] In this instance and others like it, both employers' and students' interests may well have been rewarded.

The personnel manager of a large manufacturing concern participated in EBCE for purposes of public relations and recruitment, and was not at all interested in working with students. He delegated the student contact work to his subordinates, who in turn were more interested in gaining a helping hand than in teaching students about industry. The students were assigned tasks that were quite narrow and fragmented, so that after several weeks they came away with little idea of the plant's operation. In this instance, the company got good reports in the local press and the workers got free help. But most students told the program staff that they didn't like the placement, and some who had hoped to work in the mill after graduation decided against it.[28]

An architect in central California chose to involve his firm in the local EBCE program for similar reasons:

> "[My reasons are] not all altruistic. Our firm's community involvement affects the work we get from government agencies. I've made a special effort to get involved in the problems of this city, and we've done a number of things here. We take part in the AIA educational program . . . . And I look at EBCE as a kind of community involvement. Working with students takes time, though, and I'm not really sure what the payoff is."[29]

When public realtions or the firm's local image was the chief motive for participating in EBCE, employers spent little time training or working with students and often felt that students interfered with daily production.

Sometimes employers joined the program from concern about the role of youth in the community's future. In one Western state, an employer

explained his participation as follows:

> "One of the big problems we have . . . is that as kids grow up, they leave the area . . . . So one of the reasons for really trying to make programs like this work is [to] keep the kids in town and give them jobs. There's a lot of competition for jobs here, and because we have a university, the high school kids have to compete with college kids . . . . Most people would rather hire older kids, so the high schoolers have a hard time. It discourages many who don't plan to go to college, so they just move out. But that's not right. We have to find a way to keep the kids in town, and programs like this will do it."[30]

This man, whose son had moved to the West Coast after completing school, worked hard to interest teen-agers in his medium-sized business, and recruited other local employers for the program as well.

While most employers used some business or economic incentive to explain their involvement in EBCE, some spoke of a personal motive. They saw it as an opportunity to enrich their own jobs by teaching and working with high school students. We were impressed by how many of these resource persons--especially professionals and people with small businesses--seemed to genuinely enjoy the change of pace and the novelty that working with students provided. For them, the program was a chance to come into contact with young people, and a break in the routine--if not actually by doing different things, such as giving tours or providing demonstrations, then by talking with students or involving them in the work at hand. In explaining why he liked working with EBCE students, a veterinarian said, "I guess there's some sort of ego thing involved. I'm really happy showing them what I do." He added, however:

> "The closest I can really get them to the work itself is when I'm performing surgery and have the students pass me instruments I need for the operation. That's about as far as they can go in getting an idea of what a vet does . . . ."[31]

Many of these employers, then, signed on for reasons closely paralleling the reasons why students got involved. The need for novelty and variety was not confined to students.

Those employers who genuinely enjoyed working with students spent time and effort on the substantial task of giving students an overview of the occupation and the jobs or careers it offered. The personnel manager of a steel plant on the East Coast, for example, developed an elaborate seven-week curriculum on all phases of steel production, from business management, hiring, and collective bargaining to metallurgy, steel processing, and the marketing of final products. Union resistance--or the fear of it--prevented him from putting students to work in the plant, but the time and energy that clearly went into constructing his curriculum, and the obvious delight he took in teaching it, evidenced his firm commitment to helping students to learn about work.[32]

A few resource people saw themselves as teachers in their relationship with EBCE students, and reported to us that they liked that new role. Sometimes they had had a prior interest in education--had considered teaching as a career for themselves, or came from a family of teachers, or at one time had taught. One example is the director of public relations of a suburban YMCA who formerly taught but left because:

> "school systems put up obstacles against good teaching . . . . But what I'm doing with these [EBCE] students is very definitely teaching."[33]

Employers who genuinely tried to be community teachers engaged students in conversations about work, personal and educational requirements, and the tasks involved in different jobs. But although their intentions were good, they often had difficulty explaining the complex personal or technical

aspects of their work so that students could understand them. A conversation with a stockbroker illustrated the problem:

> Asked whether the students ask him what it takes to be a stockbroker, he said, "Yes. I tell them that it's primarily a sales job, and talk about the personality requirements and compare [them] to those of, for example, an investment analyst"; [but] "the projects have never gotten to the depth of exploring . . . how much volume of sales a broker must generate in order to earn, say, $25,000 of income." Asked whether he thought students left with an understanding of how difficult the brokerage business is he smiled and said that . . . in his view, it was just beyond the comprehension of youngsters that age.[32]

The architect we mentioned earlier echoed this sentiment:

> "I don't think students really pick up the complexity of the field. Most of them are very task-oriented. They want to know, 'How do I get there? What courses do I have to take and how many years do I have to spend in school?' Then they ask me how much money I make. But they never ask about what satisfaction I get from the job. I guess I wasn't much different in high school."[33]

Some of these employers, then, confined their lessons to those aspects of the work that they judged to be concrete and understandable by teen-agers. They tried hard, but were not exceptional teachers. Indeed, many students reported that instruction provided at work was far more stultifying than the teaching in school.

There were also employers who saw EBCE as a chance to provide teen-agers with something they thought was missing from and needed in public education. Employers talked about their own missed opportunities, and said that by working with programs like EBCE they hoped to help some of today's students broaden their horizons before they made wrong choices and closed off future options. Others related that their own children had lacked a sense of direction in high school and had gone on to an equally confused college or work life. They hoped to help youngsters avoid the same mistakes. The postmaster mentioned earlier said that, in addition

to recruiting for the postal service, he had decided to participate in EBCE because:

> "I wanted to contribute to the community and to the children. I have five boys myself, and my oldest one still doesn't know what he wants to do. He doesn't even know how to apply for a job, and he always [asks], 'What do they do in that place, anyway?' . . . We emphasize making job applications and the resume process [at the post office placement]. My boy doesn't even know how to do that."[36]

Still others saw it as a civic duty to teach youth about traditional American values and the realities of the business world--something they felt the schools did poorly, if at all. For example, the owner of a car dealership in the Northwest reported that he welcomed the chance to provide a conservative antidote to the misguided liberalism expounded by most high school teachers.[37] A retired land developer in another community became involved for much the same reason. Critical of simulated work experience and outdated vocational education programs, he provided several acres of non-commercial property near the school, heavy equipment and tools, and his own expertise, to give several youngsters the opportunity to build a road, renovate a dilapidated dwelling, and completely wire it for electricity and heat. Although the road led nowhere and he said the building would never be used, he wanted to let some students learn "real" skills and the meaning of "hard work"--opportunities that he felt schools and contemporary society rarely offered. Disapproval of "soft" education motivated his participation in EBCE.[38]

Many employers believed that school was too academic and provided students with "hands-on" work to teach them about jobs. Sometimes that work was a challenge, and the student's performance highly successful.

> "The one student who stayed was super. She spent five to six hours a week with us, working with the

> crisis intervention team emergency services, for about six weeks. We really put her through the wringer. She spent a lot of time in the emergency room, dealing with DOA's, people with severe emotional problems who end up there, and some of the really stinky problems involving severe physical injury and trauma. She got a chance to observe a really good crisis intervention worker in action. She got to do some social work practice with patients and families. She got to share in staff meetings, graduate student meetings--we really put a lot of emphasis on participation in the work that goes on around here."[41]

Some employers then did provide an experience which was integral and inherently involving in the life of the workplace--an experience which was welcomed by students when it happened.

A good many employers merely regarded the students as workers. Some then became frustrated when the students didn't respond as adults. As the fashion coordinator of a West Coast department store explained:

> "I haven't had very good luck [with EBCE students]--they're tardy, there's a lack of enthusiasm, and a lack of a business attitude. Things move fast around here. I'm in and out of the store a lot and I don't have a lot of time to spend coaxing people. If they're not really with it, they're not going to get much out of it."[39]

Some of these employers delegated responsibility to someone else--or, feeling that they had no real authority to criticize or discipline students, got fed up and withdrew from the program. A learning coordinator describes this situation:

> "I have found the job site people sometimes to be deceptive. . . . Sometimes they say everything is going all right and then all of a sudden, in the next week, they will call and say, 'I want this student out of here.'" . . . She thought [employers] were sometimes too concerned about how to treat the student. So instead of asking the student to leave if things were not working out, they would usually wait until something happened and then there would be a crisis.[40]

As illustrated above, EBCE allowed for a wide range of reasons for employer participation--reasons both practical and personal, and in most cases a complicated mix of the two. But only rarely did those reasons include a commitment to the serious and sustained work with students. Like the EBCE teachers, employers related to the program by putting into it and taking from it the things that interested them, and paying less attention to its formal goals. They thus offered students work-related experiences, observations, some job information, and a taste of hands-on work. Some employers were unable to provide more because of organizational or legal constraints, or because students had insufficient skills or interest. But many employers were themselves less interested in the program aims than in the opportunity to satisfy personal or business-related agendas of their own. The reactions of employers to the program, and the forces that influenced their interpretations of it, thus clearly paralleled those of other key participants.

Conclusions

The community-based component of EBCE produced mixed results. On the one hand, there were some limits to how much students could learn from their work experience. There were several influences which contributed to these limits: students' short and fragmented exposure at job sites, their lack of occupational skills, their unrealistic expectations, and employers' lack of experience in teaching and managing teen-agers. On the other hand, these limits did not dampen students' enthusiasm for EBCE, and in particular for its community component. Many students learned that the program's unusual flexibility--much of which was due to the opportunity to work outside school--enabled them to discover or create ways of doing what they most

wanted. Sometimes this was constructive--pursuing personal interests or working toward future careers--and sometimes less so--escaping from school or avoiding any sort of demands. Other uses may or may not have been constructive--getting out of school for paid work, or finding part-time jobs through placements. But whatever our view of the various uses, they help to explain the programs' great popularity among youth.

The work experiences offered to students in the program nonetheless raise questions about how much can be expected from the community in helping youth learn about work. Employer roles and attitudes in EBCE, then, are an important consideration. Employers were willing to participate in EBCE for mixed reasons. They wanted to help students by giving them a picture of the "real" world of work. They also joined the program for public relations purposes, to screen potential future employees, to get free help, and for many other reasons. They were constrained, though, in how much help they could provide to students. The demands of the workplace compromised their involvement and, despite the best intentions, allowed students only cursory exposure and limited contact with different aspects of a job or career.

Footnotes to Chapter IV

1. Stix, S. and D.K. Cohen, The Implementation of EBCE: A Survey of Programs and Populations. Cambridge, MA: The Huron Institute, October 1978, p. 62.
2. Ibid., p. 66.
3. EBCE student, 12/17.
4. EBCE student, 4/78.
5. EBCE student, 4/78.
6. EBCE student, 12/77.
7. EBCE student, 3/78.
8. EBCE student, 5/78.
9. EBCE student, 12/77.
10. EBCE student, 5/78.
11. EBCE student, 4/78.
12. EBCE student, 2/78.
13. EBCE parent, 5/77.
14. EBCE student, 5/78.
15. EBCE student, 12/77.
16. Project Director, 2/78.
17. Project Coordinator, 2/80.
18. EBCE parent, 1/77.
19. EBCE student, 4/77.
20. Former EBCE student and Community Resource, 5/77.
21. EBCE student, 12/77.
22. EBCE student, 2/78.
23. Community Resource, 5/77.
24. Community Resource, 3/79.

25. Community Resource, 3/77.
26. Community Resource, 5/78.
27. Ibid.
28. Community Resource, 12/76.
29. Community Resource, 4/77.
30. Community Resource, 4/78.
31. Community Resource, 2/78.
32. Community Resource, 12/76.
33. Community Resource, 4/77.
34. Community Resource, 3/77.
35. Community Resource, 3/77.
36. Community Resource, 4/77.
37. Community Resource, 4/77.
38. Community Resource, 2/78.
39. Community Resource, 3/77.
40. Learning Manager, 4/78.
41. Community Resource, 3/77.

V. EBCE AS A MORAL CURRICULUM

EBCE intended to reform the moral content of schooling, for at the time of EBCE's inception, it was widely believed that the schools were failing in their moral mission. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw an apparent lack of discipline, affinity for drugs, sexual laxity, odd dress, and anti-establishment attitudes on the part of youth. Schools were thought to contribute to this in two ways. First, they isolated youth from adult society. Young people were thus influenced far more by each other than by adults. This served to reinforce behavior that was unacceptable to adult society and culture. Second, schools socialized youth into passivity. Their authoritarian and rule-bound structure prevented schools from transmitting the social skills for adult success.

Thus, schools were considered a breeding ground for a "youth culture" marked by rebellion against adult society. As a way to curtail, if not eliminate, this "pathological" youth culture and the moral laxity it encouraged, several national policy reports suggested taking young people out of school and putting them in the workplace. Proponents of this idea hoped that exposure to the world of work would both minimize the deleterious influence of schools and teach youth the responsibilities of adult life.

EBCE took these recommendations seriously. It sought to reform the moral curriculum of schooling in two ways: by changing the structural aspects of schooling so as to loosen up some of the bureaucratic and procedural rigidity, and by placing students in the community and workplace. The hope was that by exposing students to more constructive settings, both in and out of schools, and to working adults who took an interest, the

behavior and attitudes of students would improve. But this reform met with mixed success. Procedural changes did take place, and students liked the result. There were modest changes in the ways teachers and students interacted, but not many in the behavior of most students while in school. Nor did students' experiences in the community appear to have a dramatic effect on their behavior. Adults in the workplace were usually too busy with their own concerns and responsibilities to have much influence on students. Ironically, given the wish to increase the influence of adults on youth, those who seemed to have the greatest influence, both in and outside school, were other students.

Freedom as a Learning Responsibility

The overwhelming majority of EBCE students liked the program. Its looser organizational structure, higher teacher to pupil ratio, and flexibility and novelty freed them from some of the traditional constraints of school. Many said they were bored with the endless routine of fixed schedules, classes organized and taught in much the same way from course to course and year to year, days spent in the same classrooms and buildings--all enormously predictable. They "hated schools and teachers, sitting in classes, and trying to get stuff done on a regular schedule." They "hated the set activities and assignments, like reading 50 pages this week."[1] According to many students, this routine was the main source of their boredom in school. "There's some of that [in EBCE], but it's a lot more free," one of these students added.[2]

To some degree EBCE freed students from mass education. They had more contact with teachers and more leeway to organize their own learning programs and develop their own curricula; they could learn at their own

rate and not that set by the regular classroom teacher. As one EBCE student explained, "Even though the projects and the survival skills are mapped out, we can do it at our own pace."[3] Another said that "[the regular class] . . . is pretty much geared to smarter kids, so in EBCE I can move at my own pace."[4] Nor were those who couldn't keep up with regular classroom instruction the only ones to profit; others were able to move ahead faster. One obviously bright student liked the program because, unlike in regular school, he "could set up some science classes of my own . . . and proceed at my own pace."[5]

Particularly students who were "average" complained that formerly they had rarely had occasion for protracted contact with a teacher; that it was difficult to meet with teachers to discuss class work; and indeed, that many teachers passed through the year apparently knowing only a few students' names. To many of them, greater contact with their teachers--through individual projects and the low student to teacher ratio--was the overriding benefit of the program. The EBCE staff "treats you differently," one student said. "They're more concerned about you and . . . know more about you and your personal life. They talk to you as equals. They are more or less friends with you."[6]

Interestingly, far more girls than boys mentioned contact with staff as an important source of satisfaction with the program; equally interesting is the infrequency with which either talked about relationships at work. This is particularly noteworthy since EBCE was to foster relations between youth and working adults; in fact, it seems to have encouraged relations between students and teachers, evidently meeting a need felt by many students.

Students seemed to enjoy the new freedom of a flexible schedule to organize their own academic work. One EBCE instructional aide was surprised by how much her students benefited from this curricular freedom:

> "[They] knew the field a whole lot better than I; they had read the materials and so forth . . . in effect, they wrote their own project . . . and developed [it]."[7]

Other students took the opportunity to pursue interests that were not necessarily academic, such as skiing, ballet, and similar activities. The less authoritarian approach of EBCE was also a source of gratification to students. As one student, asked to compare the program with regular high school, reported:

> "I won't say it's real free here, because they are disciplined, but you can get a drink of water or go to the bathroom without asking the teacher. It's up to you to act your age and be mature . . . to show up good on job sites, and if the kid messes up it's bad for all of us."[8]

Students thus liked the novelty and variety EBCE introduced into their lives--the escape from the classroom, the more flexible schedules, and the relative freedom from control. As a result, the atmosphere in EBCE programs was more lively than that in other parts of the parent school system. But students' appreciation of these changes did not necessarily result in more mature and responsible behavior. True, many EBCE students were on time for school and work commitments, completed assignments, and abided by rules they had ignored in traditional classes. But many were motivated by the sanctions that would otherwise result. They behaved responsibly within the program not because their views about what constitutes appropriate behavior had fundamentally changed, but in order to avoid dismissal from the program. When behavior changed, then, it was often for strategic reasons. For some students, this may have led to more permanent and deeply rooted

changes in attitudes and behavior; for others, the changes may have been temporary, the means to a short-term end.

Moreover, while students liked EBCE's greater freedom in theory, they could not always use it well in practice. EBCE imposed fewer constraints that students might rebel against, and thus offered less provocation. But given more leeway to establish their own goals and deadlines, and to carry them out with modest supervision, students often admitted to major difficulties. As one learning specialist pointed out, "students [in EBCE] don't know how to use their time" in organizing their own learning.[9] This is illustrated by our field notes on a conversation with one student:

> [She found] that the most difficult part of the program was "making up your own schedule and keeping up with it." [She clearly found it] a distressing experience. "It's up to us to plan out a week--advisors, classes, resource time, studying--and stick to it," she said. "If you don't do it, you're lost."[10]

Difficulties like these were quite common in many programs, as the following excerpt from a conversation with a principal indicates:

> Asked whether EBCE students have some trouble in coping with the increased amount of free scheduling, his answer was that some kids cannot handle that amount of freedom and went back into the regular classroom. He estimated that [there] were about ten [such] students [in a program of 70].[11]

Other problems recurred or persisted, though often under new names. Thus students reported having trouble with "responsibility"--completing projects on time or reporting to work sites on schedule. They attended work sites as they might a class--that is, not always with the regularly planned by program staff and employers. According to one teacher coordinator:

> "One of the weaknesses is in trying to instill in a student a sense of responsibility in regard to his or her freedom."[12]

An employer echoed this sentiment:

> "I'm familiar with all the old rackets they try--the dentist, calling in sick, a problem at home, and so forth. The biggest problem is getting high school kids to accept the responsibility for getting to work."[13]

Complaints of this sort were common among both employers and EBCE staff. A site coordinator "was never sure they'll show up at their jobs."[14] And a field researcher related this somewhat amusing incident:

> "We [were heading] out to the steel company with three students, a girl and two boys. One of the boys is a chronic absentee and he wasn't around as we [were leaving] the school. But [we] saw him in the gym, went in and got him, and hauled him along with us."[15]

Other students did attend their work sites regularly, but were unresponsive in other ways. For example, it was not uncommon to hear community site coordinators explain that one problem they had to contend with was that "some students are out of order when they get to the stie."[16] This was confirmed by others, such as one hard-line staff member:

> "The whole orientation in the office is to keep the lid on these kids when they're [on site] and to keep destruction down." He added that he also had to keep an eye on the kids so that they wouldn't swipe things--so that someone in the site wasn't missing $10 at the end of their visit.[17]

As might be expected, such students were also problems at school. And as in school, those who showed signs of responsibility on work sites were given more of it--as is shown by this conversation with a student who worked up to assistant manager at a health spa:

> "[I was taught] to keep the books, do the accounting, how to buy various kinds of rackets, how to maintain the pool, pay the bills and figure out and send the bills to members. I've really had a chance to get into the business part of it."[18]

Another student designed entire kitches for interested clients. From our notes:

> She explained that there was a book which contained certain fixtures and their prices. She would then . . . design kitchens with a certain amount of space, [using] the catalogs and their references, [and would] put together a whole kitchen with different types of equipment . . . . After a while she was able to work with customers in the store and help them to do some of their own planning and the costing out of what they wanted.[19]

Often, these were the students who also behaved responsibly in school. But sometimes they were not. Some students whom staff reported had been problematic in school seemed to thrive outside it.

In the main, then, while the program introduced some changes, in name or in substance, that students welcomed, EBCE students were like students in any school, though they learned to do things they would not do in school. As one skills specialist pointed out, "They still see school as school."[20]

There were exceptions: the boy who worked at the health spa, for example, had done badly at school. Another student, a potential dropout, began to show rare signs of responsibility when placed at a back alley theater.[21] This student's lifelong ambition was to be an actor, so this community placement had special meaning for him. Another EBCE student, who found it hard to get up in the morning for school and was often absent, seemed to have no trouble getting up regularly to make custom-made furniture at his site. He enjoyed the work and "was learning a lot about wood."[22] Felicitous placements that met the students' special interests seemed to encourage responsible behavior. In other cases where EBCE seemed to change students' outlook and values, special student-teacher relationships seemed key. EBCE teachers occasionally seemed to provide exactly what students needed and sought--usually some combination of affection, support, interest, and timely intervention. These relationships greatly benefited the students and brought both parties much

satisfaction, but of course resulted from no set formula. Even teachers found it hard to explain why they got on with some students and not with others.

For the most part, neither teachers nor community adults were able to demonstrate this type of effectiveness--mainly because they were not up to the new or expanded functions the program demanded of them. Teachers, while retaining most of their traditional responsibilities, acquired a host of new ones in addition; and employers, busy with the concerns of the workplace, did not see themselves in a socializing role.

The EBCE Staff

EBCE sought to foster students' initiative, independence, and sense of responsibility--their transition to adulthood--in part through much more extensive intervention in students' lives by teachers. Acting as counselors and mentors rather than authority figures, teachers would help students confront the consequences of irresponsible, inappropriate behavior, and provide support and encouragement for changing it. In fact, due to the higher teacher to student ratio, the program staff did have a closer relationship to students and influenced such matters as selection of community sites and topics for academic projects as well as personal matters. But at the same time, they retained the traditional functions of teachers; they still had to guide and monitor students' learning, assign grades and credits, and regulate students' behavior. Many of these tasks were to have been taken over by the community; but owing to the school-based nature of the program, the EBCE staff came to be responsible for much of the student activity both in and outside school. And most of them were simply overwhelmed by the task.

The students' needs and demands were enormous. Many EBCE teachers pointed out that the program was more exhausting than the traditional classroom. As one learning coordinator put it,

> "You are completely responsible for each kid's whole education while you're working with him . . . . You can't just cover the [course] content . . . . You have to be involved with almost everything . . . , certainly everything educational and often more."[23]

Many EBCE staff found it difficult to adapt to this expanded role. One project director reported that to her staff, all former traditional classroom teachers, it was "a tremendous shock" to be put in charge of a new and sometimes chaotic program, with new kinds of demands and responsibilities.[24] A learning manager in another site said that he had "become so organized toward a certain system. I had a style and was comfortable working in it." He missed the autonomy and flexibility he had had, and was now "much more dependent on others."[25] And often the program staff were torn between facilitating students' academic learning on the one hand and their personal growth on the other. One project director explained:

> "I believe that the key role in EBCE is the learning coordinator, and I think that self-development is the single most important concept in EBCE--I think it's more important than the academic stuff, although that's important too. It's hard to establish priorities between the academic learning and self-development, but in some respects it has to be done. The learning coordinator may be able to establish priorities that are personally satisfactory, but he has to pay attention to what the school is supposed to do--teach kids certain things."[26]

In trying to meet the varied and sometimes competing demands of the new program, the EBCE staff tended to move toward the more familiar task of directing students' learning, rather than helping them to develop and mature. If they tried to do everything the program called for, they soon found that they could not sustain that degree of involvement. They tended to "burn

out," according to one learning coordinator: "I just did not have any time . . . to do anything else but make sure students went to their work sites and try to get them organized."[27] Another staff member found that her "biggest problem was not enough time to manage the total learning of students."[28] As a result, most staff focused on the familiar areas of academic learning and spent less time in personal counseling. One teacher coordinator said that the program staff at first felt uncomfortable "making students take math and English," but discovered that this was a regular occurrence. She added that "it's not been difficult because most of [the students] need help, and they realize it."[29]

The traditional teaching role was reinforced because, contrary to the early program intentions, the EBCE staff were also responsible for student activity in the community. If students failed to meet the standards of the community, the staff--and in turn the program and the school--would be blamed. They therefore tended to direct students to placements they thought appropriate, rather than letting the students themselves make their choice. Asked why he had spent only two weeks at a certain site, one student said that the teachers "pretty well decide how long to stay. They tell you if you can stay longer or not."[30]. And teachers tried to control students' behavior at work sites--their attendance, punctuality, and dress --just as teachers had always done, though in a different arena. One student explained that the learning coordinators "keep after kids and check [whether they are] going to their resources. If you don't go . . . , you sure better call them; if you don't, you are in big trouble."[31] In this case, students were first warned and then put on probation if they didn't meet their obligations. The staff thus found themselves engaged

in the familiar activities of managing, keeping track of, and disciplining students, whether they had intended to or not.

For the most part, EBCE students contributed to the traditional teacher-student relationship by acting like students. While they liked the freedom and flexibility of the program, they still depended on the guidance of teachers. They tried, as in traditional school, to follow instructions in order to meet the requirements of the program--whether by attending work sites or writing up their academic projects. They responded to the EBCE staff as to traditional teachers, with traditional control over grades, course credits, and the like. And as we pointed out earlier, many of them floundered when they were given greater responsibility for organizing their learning and meeting their commitments. The result was that the teacher-like role of the EBCE staff expanded to include not only teaching, but site placement, counseling and curriculum development. But in most cases, little attention could be given to students' personal and social experiences to help them grow up in the community. This role was further shaped by the minimal involvement of community adults in students' lives. Students seeking direction and guidance, and finding non-school adults remote or inaccessible for various reasons, typically turned to an already busy EBCE staff member.

Community Adults

The second aspect of EBCE's effort to reform the schools' moral curriculum was to teach the values and social skills necessary for job success through exposure to life in the community. By working with non-school adults rather than being segregated with age-mates in an authoritarian setting, youngsters would begin to shed the irratic and rebellious ways of their "youth culture" and learn to think and act more like responsible and independent adults.

But this effort, too, was only partially successful. We observed that adults in the community generally did not show much interest in trying to influence student behavior. What conversations we had with them on such matters as discipline and students' social skills were remarkably short. There were several reasons for this. First, EBCE offered little opportunity for students to develop close relationships with working adults. Indeed, many spent little time with any one adult, because much of the assigned work was solitary or consisted of brief contact with workers in various parts of the business. Even when students spent a full thirteen weeks in one job--which occurred in far fewer than half of the cases--this was hardly sufficient for close relationships to develop, or for the envisioned socialization to occur. Students reported formal question and answer or instructional exchanges with employers, but little sustained informal give and take. Employers as well as students reported difficulty in knowing how to deal with one another, and as a result of this unease kept their distance unless contact was essential. Moreover, adults had to meet the normal demands of their work and so had little time to devote to students. But perhaps the main reason why community adults had only limited influence on students was that they did not see themselves as socializing agents. For the most part, they were concerned with students' behavior only insofar as it interfered with the functioning of the workplace; and then the responsibility was seen as the school's, and more particularly the EBCE staff's.

Community adults were disinclined to deal with the more personal concerns of students, whatever they might be. This tendency was frequently acknowledged by the EBCE staff. As one EBCE staff member explained "The

only time we hear from employers is when a student's behavior is so bad they want the student removed from the site."[32] The employers generally not only made no effort to influence student behavior, but did not even see it as their responsibility.

Where community resource people did try to assume a socializing role, they were often frustrated by the cultural and social norms of the workplace: getting the work done in the most economical and expeditious manner. Lacking the necessary time and organizational support, non-school adults, despite their intentions, found it difficult to concern themselves with students. They had their own work to attend to. The ethos of the workplace generally does not permit an employer to act as social worker even to his own employees, much less to "visiting" students. Thus employers spent little time with students, as this field note on one employer, a stock analyst, indicates:

> The projects run eight to nine weeks, and he generally devoted one hour to them twice a week. Once [students'] projects are defined, "they go off pretty much on their own and they may only come around every couple of weeks or so." (I thought this interesting, because [he] is asked to initial the amount of time they spend at the firm . . . but he probably doesn't know exactly how much [that is].) Asked whether he expected students to go off on their own, . . . he said . . . that they seem to prefer to do that. But he is always in the office at 9 a.m., and has told them if they want to talk to him, to just come in. [But] he said that they tend not to do it--which I thought was . . . revealing about the students' level of involvement--[and] that sometimes they talk to other brokers, but unless they're doing a job analysis, they don't much, in his view.[33]

Busy with their own work, employers were often hard to get hold of--as students were not hesitant to point out:

> He said they were not always around when you wanted them . . . . He had that problem when he went to visit his accounting site. He . . . is trying to go there now and has gone once already. From his first visit it sounded really exciting;

> the accountant was going to give him someone's actual account [anonymously] and let him figure [it] by entering the debits and balances and totaling them. It sounded like interesting work, because [it] involved business law and some other things he might learn about, [but] "it might take me a while to finish this one, because he is so busy I have to call him up that day to see if I can come. It's a real hassle."[34]

To EBCE students and staff, it often seemed the community adults were not paying adequate attention to students, as this conversation with a brash but articulate student reveals:

> Asked what he would change about the program, Kevin responded, "[I] would suggest they start with more resources than students." He also said that "the people in the resources should be screened," and [that] some site people aren't sure "what the students are doing there."[35]

From the EBCE staff's point of view, the best employer resources were often those who knew "how to work for students and help them but not jeopardize their own job in the process."[36]

A further problem was that students were limited in the kinds of work they could do. The intention was to enable them to exercise more judgment and independence than they could in school, and the EBCE staff emphasized this in their arrangements with employers. But employers often found it rather difficult to put that notion into practice. One of them expressed this difficulty, which was recorded in our field notes:

> An issue worth mentioning was the whole question of "how much responsibility can you give the kids?" In his type of work there weren't a lot of things he could actually give them to do, but he often wondered about what he could give [them], and to what extent they could be responsible in doing something. [But] with their spending only two days a week at the site, it was hard to do much.[37]

He pointed out that "[the students] cannot do much because there is not much for someone in their position to do."[38] What happened as a result, according to one EBCE project director, was that unless community resource

people "have terribly well developed plans," students were usually shuffled aside or stuck into one job.[39] Often, students were just not qualified to do much more than menial jobs involving little responsibility and independence--at least not much more than in school, for example in completing a homework assignment. Indeed, even many regular site employees had little chance to exercise responsibility or independence in their work. Professional positions were the exception, but students' access to these was virtually precluded by lack of the requisite knowledge and experience. For example, a veterinarian whom we have quoted before explained that he would be happy to have students spend more time at his clinic and possibly learn to assist him in surgery by passing him instruments. But that is "as far as I can go . . . because they do not really know much."[40] Even under the best circumstances, students' opportunities to exercise more responsibility and to grow personally through their site experience were thus limited by their marginality at work, and the little work they could technically do.

For the reasons described, then adults in the community had only limited influence on students. Contrary to the rhetoric of the program, which assigned them some responsibility for student behavior, working adults held the EBCE school staff accountable for it. To some extent this was due to the ethos of the workplace, which did not encourage adults to concern themselves with students in lieu of their work-related responsibilities. And the workplace itself proved a poor resource for providing students with social experiences substantially different from their passive role in school. For the most part, students' lack of technical skills prevented the workplace from allowing them greater responsibility and independence than they knew in school; and exposure to the community had little effect

on students' attitudes. The program was thus hardly effective in cutting away at the "youth culture" that was of so much concern to the policy planners and developers of career education programs.

EBCE and the Youth Culture

Quite contrary to countering what was seen as a harmful youth culture, EBCE allowed that culture to persist, if not thrive, through the structural reforms it introduced. The loosening of the bureaucratic practices of schooling, and work site placement, allowed students to spend more time with each other than formerly. They tended to congregate at the EBCE program center, whether this was a room or area in the regular school building or one in a separate building. There, students were free to meet, talk, and mingle with one another to a degree not sanctioned in traditional school. And EBCE students were far less constrained by fixed schedules and the practices of the classroom, where student interaction is minimal and the teacher is the major processor of that interaction. Despite seminars, small group meetings, and conferences with staff and work site people, they had considerable opportunity to spend time with each other; and typically, that is what they did.

This tended to increase student interaction both at school and in the community (although not always at work sites), which in turn influenced students' decisions and behavior. While individual instruction was emphasized in school, once out of school, students tended to select and visit sites together when possible. A survey report on EBCE, for example, points out that only half the programs reported that students visited sites individually.[41] This type of visiting was confirmed by the students themselves. For example, one of them told us:

> During the 7th and 8th period "we usually go [to] the library and think of an appointment in the community we might like to make." I asked what she did at the library; she explained that usually she and her friends "did some research and found out about some sites we might be visiting."[42]

And another student, when asked how he ended up at a lawyer's office, explained:

> He went with a friend who was working there to see what the site was like, and liked it--found it really interesting to listen to all the cases going on. So now that site really had two placements. (This story confirmed that the site placements are quite loosely arranged and students pretty much did what they wanted in the afternoon, including visiting the sites of friends as well as their own site.)[43]

Students' freedom to interact with each other thus tended to carry over to site attendance. And, as one somewhat distressed EBCE staff member reported, this type of gregariousness interfered with their site experience:

> "Students are not getting hands-on experience as they should be." The staff member was somewhat perplexed, . . . because "students are willing to work for nothing, but they are not getting involved." Some, she thought, just "loved visiting and socializing . . . . " She noticed a lot of students going to sites with other students, and wasn't sure that was conducive to getting . . . experience. That was not always the case, though, and she had "seen some students blossom."[44]

In many programs, EBCE quickly gained a reputation as more student-oriented than traditional school. Students told each other about its freedom and flexibility compared to regular school, and many joined the program because of this hearsay. Others reported that they had become interested in the program because of the efforts of other students. For example, one girl linked her enrollment to a filmstrip on EBCE which students had shown on several occasions,[46] and others said they had joined because their friends did. As in these examples, the influence of their peers was clearly an important factor in helping students decide to join EBCE.

Typically, the school faculty encouraged students who were disruptive or had poor academic records to enroll in the program. A common complaint among EBCE staff was that the regular school staff did this "because they do not want [these students] in the classroom when they are making trouble or not attending."[47] As one counselor said, "If I felt they were successful academically, I would rarely recommend them [for the program]."[48] This attitude on the part of school counselors and teachers helped to create a body of EBCE students who had found it difficult to cope with the more demanding environment of school. In these programs, many students were inclined to use the loose structure of the program to spend their time with each other rather than with school adults. And when site placements were a problem for these students, which they frequently were, they spent even more time with each other. The high concentration of problem students in many EBCE programs intensified their influence on each other, with effects, if anything, more troublesome than in traditional school.

EBCE, then, was far from curtailing what policy planners and reports saw as an isolated and harmful "youth culture" fostered by schools. On the contrary, it tended to foster that culture, since the aims of the reform required that the traditional reins on student behavior and movement in school be somewhat relaxed. Free of those constraints, students who were so inclined were able to spend as much time together informally as school adults in EBCE would permit. This might not have occurred if community resource people had initially been willing to become more involved, to assume more responsibility and exercise more control; but as it was, students were a strong influence on each other.

Conclusions

EBCE had hoped, by changing the confining and unhealthy environment of the school and exposing students to adults in the workplace, to help dissolve students' influence on each other and their disruptive youthful ways; but that aim was only occasionally realized. There were several reasons for this. First, the fact that EBCE was school-based imposed limits on the changes that could be made in the traditional environment of schooling. Students liked the changes that did occur, but there was little indication that these changes affected their overall attitudes and behavior. Second, teachers in EBCE faced many of the same demands as did teachers in traditional school, and tended to respond in much the same way. And students in their turn reacted much as they had to traditional teachers.

EBCE did allow the placement of students among community adults at work sites. But student experiences at these sites had no marked effect on the moral curriculum of schooling either. Their own roles as workers usually prevented community adults from taking on the responsibility of a socializing agent.

Ironically, what remained a dominant influence on students' attitudes in EBCE was other students. This occurred because students in EBCE had more freedom to spend time with each other than they did in traditional school. As a result, rather than dissolving a youth culture created by youth's isolation in school, EBCE tended to nurture it.

This part of the story of EBCE suggests another major reason for the limited success of EBCE in improving upon the schools' moral mission: schools may not be very effective for moral instruction--despite the fact that they have traditionally shouldered this responsibility, particularly

in the 20th century. It may well be that, as in EBCE, the number of students and the diversity of student needs make it extremely difficult for schoolpeople to give enough attention to individual students to have much effect on their social values and attitudes. Teachers, and those acting as teachers, often have their work cut out just to organize and control student behavior to make instruction and learning possible. Inculcating different attitudes and social skills in students is much more unlikely. It is too easily forgotten that the burden of providing a moral curriculum has historically fallen to schools precisely because community adults in the workplace, often by their own admission, did not want this responsibility. The somewhat apathetic response of community adults to assuming this task in EBCE was thus not surprising. Nor is it surprising that schoolpeople and outside critics, in recognizing the limitations of schooling, are inclined to try to develop alternatives to the status quo.

In this light, it seems unfair to expect schools to solve the problems of youthful behavior and attitudes--if they don't--through school-work programs. Schools may be doing the best job they can in providing a moral curriculum, given existing conditions and constraints. And despite room for improvement, it may be that improvement will not be dramatic and will not solve the problems of modern youth. Schools will no doubt remain an easy target for those seeking to assign blame for those problems, and an easily identifiable alternative for addressing those problems. Yet our study of EBCE suggests that despite the best efforts of schools, no reform with these constraints, whether school and work programs or others, is likely to do significantly better.

Footnotes to Chapter V

1. EBCE student, 4/78.
2. Ibid.
3. EBCE student, 4/78.
4. EBCE student, 3/77.
5. EBCE student, 2/78.
6. EBCE student, 3/77.
7. EBCE Instructional Aide, 4/78.
8. EBCE student, 3/78.
9. Learning Specialist, 2/78.
10. EBCE student, 3/77.
11. Principal, 2/77.
12. Teacher Coordinator, 5/78.
13. Community Resource Person, 3/77.
14. Community Site Coordinator, 3/78.
15. Community Resource Person, 12/76.
16. Community Site Coordinator, 3/78.
17. Community Site Coordinator, 1/78.
18. EBCE student, 4/78.
19. EBCE student, 4/78.
20. Skills Specialist, 2/77.
21. EBCE student, 5/79.
22. EBCE student, 4/78.
23. Learning Coordinator, 3/77.
24. Project Director, 4/78.

25. Learning Manager, 4/78.

26. Project Director, 2/78.

27. Learning Coordinator, 2/79.

28. Learning Manager, 4/78.

29. Teacher Coordinator, 5/78.

30. EBCE student, 3/78.

31. EBCE student, 3/77.

32. Community Site Coordinator, 3/78.

33. Community Resource Person, 3/77.

34. EBCE student, 2/78.

35. EBCE student, 12/77.

36. Resource Specialist, 12/77.

37. Community Resource Person, 3/78.

38. Ibid.

39. Project Director, 4/78.

40. Community Resource Person, 2/78.

41. Stix, S. and D.K. Cohen, The Implementation of EBCE: A Survey of Programs and Populations. Cambridge, MA: The Huron Institute, October 1978, p. 59.

42. EBCE student, 2/78.

43. EBCE student, 12/77.

44. Learning Specialist, 2/78.

45. EBCE student, 3/78.

46. EBCE student, 2/78.

47. Project Director, 1/79.

48. Guidance Counselor, 2/79.

VI. THE SCHOOL AND WORK COLLABORATION: LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AND CREATIVE USE

Experience-Based Career Education called for a new kind of relationship between school and community--a balanced partnership not previously tried in American education. Even though EBCE sponsors realized very early on in the innovation that community people would not replace teachers, advocates of the program still hoped that employers would be involved in policy decisions and day-to-day program operations, which would help give the program a decidedly work orientation. The partnership thus required role changes and new tasks for both teachers and employers, as well as the commitment of school administrators to the collaboration and the changes in schools that would facilitate it.

Employers were also cast in new roles as part of the school-community partnership. They were to become teachers. EBCE called on employers to teach students about the careers and jobs found at the work site. In many cases employers and workers were asked to teach "hands-on" skills, as well as providing students with a broad up-to-date overview of the abilities, qualifications, and credentials required for the job. They were also to counsel and discipline, and to share with schools the responsibility for designing and managing student site activities. Finally, employers and workers were expected to take some initiative to maintain communication with the school staff. They, as well as the educators, were to work to foster the partnership.

For their part, teachers were expected to get both the program and the partnership off the ground by recruiting work sites and community resource people. The materials provided by the laboratories to assist in local

program implementation strongly urged teachers to familiarize employers and workers with EBCE, train them for working with students, collaborate with them to design stimulating and cohesive student work experiences on site, and arrange for joint employer-teacher monitoring of student progress.

The developers had also hoped that administrators would throw their weight behind the program, publicizing their endorsement of it and working actively to build community support and employers' full participation. It was seen as helpful if they would urge school staff to make the accommodations required for the program's success, and to help free the program and its staff from traditional school rules which would otherwise constrain it.

Thus, EBCE's redesign of roles for collaboration included both school and community. Employers were asked to assume a share of responsibility for teaching youth and working with schools, and schoolpeople were to spend less time teaching and more time working in the community. These initial expectations were of course lowered as EBCE evolved in local sites, but even over time and with experience, the hope was still expressed by developers that teachers and employers would learn these new tasks and develop a strong working partnership.

The aspirations of EBCE as an out-of-school experiential learning program hinged on building and sustaining the partnership. But few of the key actors managed to do this as well as expected; almost all had problems with their new tasks, and the degree of the desired partnership rarely developed as many labs and school staff have hoped. Traditional roles and responsibilities, community attitudes toward them, and the historical separation between work and school were sufficiently powerful to re-shape the community-school collaboration in ways that made the partnership more

useful to administrators, teachers, and employers. Each of the parties involved perceived the program and behaved toward it in ways that were congruent with the traditional functions and responsibilities of their work. And while few local EBCE programs replicated the partnership models demonstrated by the lab schools and detailed in the dissemination materials, the collaborative arrangement appealed greatly to the partners, and was a success in a variety of other ways.

Functions and Responsibilities of District Administrators

Administrators' attitudes toward a new education reform program are critical for its local success; yet their reactions often have less to do with its formal goals than with its ability to address the problems which confront them in their work. In the case of EBCE, many administrators were enthusiastic about the innovation because it afforded them new ways of dealing with pressing local problems. Some of these were perennial concerns such as the schools' image in the community; others were new pressures and demands, such as the many legislated requirements which have descended on schools in recent years. EBCE allowed district administrators to do many things, from attracting federal and state funds for various student populations, to providing better programs for handicapped and gifted and talented students, to getting problem students out of school. This was possible through EBCE's focus on careers and community involvement. Because of the prevailing national preoccupation with work--ranging across such concerns as unemployment, affirmative action, mandatory retirement, and the quality of worklife, to name a few--many contemporary educational problems had come to be viewed in terms of real exoerience and work: the need for teen-agers to know more about it, investigate it, and prepare for it while still in school. The

transition from education to work was thus a hot item with instant appeal, legitimized by federal prescription as a way of dealing with school problems having nothing to do with work. Thus EBCE, with its timeliness and its great flexibility, was well situated to attract the support of many administrators.

Managing Students

Student management is a timeless preoccupation of schoolpeople. There are several variations on this concern: sorting, placing, and keeping track of students, as well as dealing with students who don't behave or won't or can't learn. The first set are chiefly logistic problems, and the traditional school organization and structure, with its schedules, grades, and programs, was developed in good part to deal with them. The second set involves chronic behavior and learning problems, which until recently were largely resolved when the offenders either misbehaved their way out of school or chose to leave. In recent years, however, that solution has become less acceptable. Suspension and expulsion, the old last resorts in cases of persistent misbehavior, have become increasingly difficult to enforce, largely as the result of court decisions and legislation. By the same token, many students with learning problems who would have dropped out a generation ago are choosing to remain in school, whether for lack of jobs, the unwillingness of the military to accept them or its weakened appeal, or their preference for the company of friends in school. Whatever the reasons, students who would have dropped out in an earlier time are staying on.

According to people in schools, these students are a monumental problem. They attend school but don't attend classes, or attend classes but are

disruptive; they vandalize the school or threaten other students and staff, or are chronic truants in constant need of attention and remediation. To complicate the issue, many schools would prefer to keep these students in these days of declining enrollments, and thus have to find ways to keep them occupied, interested, and learning. In many districts, EBCE provided a solution to these problems.

In a rural West Coast district, the superintendent reported that EBCE had been adopted because "students were unable to find jobs and were visible on the streets. So the [school] board and the community wanted some alternative to keep kids in school--or at least tied to school and not wandering out in the community."[1] A police detective who served as a community resource agreed that this was a big local issue, partly "because more than half of the burglaries in town are committed by teen-agers, and 90% of the shoplifting is done by kids . . . . A lot of the kids [in EBCE are] the same kids that we had arrested in burglaries and robberies around here, usually petty things."[2]

According to a guidance counselor in that high school, the program was used primarily to deal with potential dropouts, but was too small to handle enough of them. "A lot of the staff complain because EBCE won't take all the kids whom the teachers would like it to take. They want to be able to send the kids who act out, but . . . they're worried that it might drain their good students, too. Their reaction is, 'Gee, if you're not taking the problem kids, what are you good for?'"[3]

One EBCE staffer thought that a mix of "60 percent of the top kids and

40 percent of the lower kids" would be ideal, because "that way we'd have better models, and they would help to pull the other kids up."[4] But thus far in this district, the student profile has not much changed. Although the large component of problem students is a serious strain on the program staff, the district's administrators and many school staff continue to view the program as a haven for potential dropouts and to use it for that purpose.

In another Western district using the program for dropout prevention, the impetus for this use was not external to the school. Here the community was less concerned with failing or troubled students than were district administrators, who expressed alarm that in the local high school of 1,500 students, 60 had dropped out or were suspended during the first seven months of school. According to the high school principal:

> "Usually they have quite a hard time [deciding to drop out], and while they can be lured back to school because they can't get a job, it's easy for them to drop out a second time. My original thought when I started selling EBCE to the school board was to use it for potential dropouts . . . . But we also have a need to keep high-ability but low-achieving kids in school, so I decided to put that first. The school board just isn't interested in drop-out prevention; those kids are forgotten. So we knew our best bet was to sell it as an alternative program for high-ability kids. Then we plan to add the low-ability kids to it later."[5]

According to this principal, students drop out or are repeatedly suspended "because we're a college town and totally geared toward college preparation, so they can't find programs well suited to them. About half of the dropouts left for lack of good alternatives. They just weren't interested in those or weren't doing well in them, and there was no place else for them to go."[6]

The director of this EBCE project discussed the student population:

> The students range from good to lousy. But we do make the point that poor students do better in the program because . . . they get a lot of individual attention; there's a low student to teacher ratio; and the program has more variety both in the subjects and in the range of difficulty of the material than do the regular school programs.[7]

An overload of disruptive students is not a problem here; "the real challenge is finding a way to motivate these terribly bored and apathetic students. It's hard to do that in such a traditional school, so EBCE is a way for kids to finish the required credits and to do something different than school."[8]

In these and many other districts, EBCE met the persistent administrative concern of managing problem students and getting them through school, in ways not possible within the context of the traditional school. EBCE was able to individualize academic instruction or to adjust the required course content for students who could not succeed in the traditional classroom settings. It could also reduce the required hours of class attendance for students who disliked school without threatening their official student status or diplomas.

In one district, a transfer student with a dismal academic record, who was a crackerjack football player and the state racquet ball champion, was enrolled in EBCE because, according to the high school principal, "I talked with his old school principal, and we concluded that he wasn't smart enough to make it in a regular program."[9] The young man was placed at a local health spa, and over the course of several months advanced to a formal position as the assistant manager. Among other things, he learned about banks, taxes, dealing with money, real estate, insurance, and job hunting, and also finished EBCE projects as fast as the staff could write them up.[10]

Program staff confirmed that this was true, and said that the boy now plans to go on to college.

Another frequently cited technique for helping students to finish school involved flexible crediting. Under this system, credits for projects could be assigned according to the student's need to meet district requirements. A conversation about the process and how it works was captured in the field notes:

> [The program director] allowed that there is "creative assigning of credit." It is often difficult to know what a project is going to be credited for: physiology, or biology, or health education, or what? As much as possible, this is determined by the areas in which students need credit. For example, all students need half a credit in health education. So a student doing a project that has to do with health or fitness or biology may get credit in health education, but if he already has that credit, then it will be called something like physiology or biology perhaps. By way of illustration he told of students going to a 40-hour paramedic workshop. Some of them received a quarter credit in health education, because they needed a credit in that area, but others received a quarter credit in physiology. It all depends on where they need credit and how the credits can be assigned.[11]

This director reported that although such flexible crediting was used, students could not accumulate more than the standard number of credits for a year's work in EBCE.[12] One student in that program said that his placement, at the local zoo, "is near home, so it's no big hassle to get there. I can cruise up there and get eight or ten hours of work in in a week. I can even go on Sundays." Asked why he would work so many hours, and on Sundays besides, he said, "Well, the more hours you work, the more credits you get." At least in this boy's view, hard work in EBCE could help him quickly make up the credits he lacked as a result of previous failures.[13]

EBCE also enabled districts to accommodate to special needs or preferences of students that conflict with traditional class and course schedules. According to a staff member in one district,

> The ski team has problems because they don't know from one week to the next when they will be travelling and when not. So he tries to arrange some independent study-type projects for them to accumulate academic credit. During the ski season, it's virtually impossible for them to do regular EBCE placements because they can't meet a steady schedule. Asked whether the team got as much credit as other students in the program, he replied flatly, no; not if they can't do the work. "I was just talking to one kid's father about this," he said, "and I told him that at this rate it will probably take his kid six years to get through high school because he just isn't doing the work. And the old man said, 'that's fine with me, if the kid wants to ski, let him do it.'"[14]

Another staff member in that district said,

> "I handle all the kids who have special problems with scheduling and credit--I've got one kid who's going to barber college, another one in beauty school, and the ski team. These are all kids who, for one reason or another, cannot do things the same way as everybody else. They have unpredictable schedules or long times when they're tied up with other things."[15]

And in yet another district, one boy spent part of a semester out of state and through EBCE received credit for his work experience. According to this young man, he joined his dad in Arizona because:

> "I hadn't seen him for a while and wanted to experience the life of a miner that he knows. A lot of life is involved in mining, you know. My father is an old-timer who operates a small, two-man operation and who actually does the dynamiting and digging and bringing out the ore himself."[16]

So the boy spent three months "doing underground hard rock mining," and for this work and a report on it reportedly received half an English credit, half a geology credit, and one credit in earth sciences. In the same district, one girl joined EBCE in order to go to Florida with her family, where she did a study on "swamp life" which earned academic credit, while another

girl was taking a trip to Spain and planned to keep a trip diary which would yield academic credit as well.[17]

In all of the various ways described, EBCE provided districts with unconventional ways to accomodate the needs of students while keeping them enrolled and earning credits toward graduation. This bothered some program staff, one of whom said that the projects were "all you had to grade the students on. It's pretty hard to tell from the project what the students did, how much time and energy they really spent visiting sites, and what they got out of it."[18] An EBCE teacher in another district conceded that his grading system was "very subjective, because everyone is doing something different. Quite frankly, I'd be hard pressed to explain how I give grades." But he added "I pretty much do my best to give the students credit for what work they can do, and give them some support in what endeavors they embark upon. What it all boils down to is that I am here to get the students graduated. I don't force a student to do something for the sake of some ideal of EBCE. That's not what I'm here for."[19]

Relations Between School and Community

The image of the schools in the community is a second perennial concern of district administrators. Efforts to enhance that image comprise a major part of any administrator's job, and programs which help are eagerly sought and supported. EBCE served this purpose well in many districts: it addressed a major national concern which related education with youth employment, and it made schooling seem more directly relevant to the present and future lives of most students. In its ability to counter a widespread feeling that much of what high schools provide is an expensive frill of little practical use in later life, the program helped to win support for

the schools. Its message to local residents and taxpayers was that district administrators shared their concern about these problems and were trying to do something about them.

In one New England district, the new superintendent believed that he was hired because of his advocacy of community work programs for teen-agers and his specific proposal to implement EBCE. Explaining why the proposal was so well received, he observed that the character of the town was shifting from rural to suburban, and that the board of education, reflecting this shift, included some members with traditional views of education and some with "more cosmopolitan, more permissive" views. This superintendent found EBCE "unique in that it appeals to both the conservatives and the liberals":

> "It appeals to the conservatives because it stresses the practicality of education, and emphasizes that students are learning about the real world. Conservative thinkers see EBCE as being about work, and in its structure they see discipline, and they see students learning to conform to the dress standards set on the sites, and so on. They see it as relevant. On the other hand, EBCE appeals to the liberals in the community and on the board because they see the program as an alternative. It's viewed as a different approach to education, one which is highly individualized and allows a lot of student input to the program. They also see it as inquiry-based and so it contains a lot of liberal values."

The superintendent believed that the board's support of EBCE was unanimous, and he anticipated no problem with maintaining that support.[20]

In an EBCE district in a Middle Atlantic state, a member of the superintendent's staff reported that EBCE had helped to revise the local newspaper editor's opinion of the schools. The field notes on this conversation contain the following:

> When asked how people in the community felt about the program, [the staff member] said that they seem to be favorably inclined, but she couldn't be sure. The editor of the [daily] newspaper has historically been violently opposed

> to the district schools. He thinks they're too expensive, that they don't accomplish enough, that they don't do well by the students . . . . The schools have been one of his chief editorial targets. But he has come around--and she attributes his change of heart to the EBCE program. EBCE students have spent time working at the newspaper.[21]

The supervisor of operations in a public utility company in the Northwest, which is an EBCE community site placement, responded with a mini-lecture when asked his opinion of the local schools:

> "The schools are too uniform and stereotyped. They don't give kids a chance to do enough different things. They keep trying to plug kids into college and academic programs with science and Latin and stuff, but a lot of kids aren't interested in that and it's water off a duck's back."

About EBCE, he said:

> "I think the programs are good. They get kids out into the real world. The education system needs to be broken down into more realistic courses. They put kids into a workshop in school, but they make useless things. When I was in school I took two years of Spanish, math, science, and so forth, but I never used the science or Spanish. Why should kids do that? Except maybe for the small minority who are ready to go through a full four years of college. The stuff the kids can take in addition to the academic things--shop, business courses, and so on--are often pretty moronic. Getting out into the community and coming to a place like this is so much more substantive. It is innovative, but we need to try some new things."[22]

Those who are uniquely positioned to shape local attitudes toward the schools, such as newspaper editors, are carefully cultivated by most district superintendents. The views of influential business people and public figures also help to swing community sentiment regarding school budgets, bond bills, and the renewal of administrators' contracts. But in many communities, those whose support is most vigorously pursued are parents--who have a special stake in the quality of local education and the values which the schools convey. In many districts, EBCE was used to woo the support of parent groups.

In one Southwestern district, where traditional American values had recently undergone a resurgence, EBCE was adopted to respond to the new community enthusiasm for the past. According to the assistant superintendent in this district:

> "We're doing a lot in affective education. We developed a questionnaire to find out what parents wanted the schools to do most . . . . I expected that basic skills would top the list of interests, but it turned out that there were several other things before it . . . . The first priority was personal responsibility . . . . The second was--and get this--personal responsibility in marriage and parenthood. In fact, the first four priorities all fell in the affective domain. Basic skills didn't appear until ninth on the list. So we decided to give parents what they wanted."[23]

According to this district administrator, EBCE is just the right program for teaching young people about some kinds of responsibility, and this was the main reason for its adoption and anticipated continuation. In this instance, work exploration and basic skills instruction were less attractive to the district than the traditional values EBCE seemed to convey. But its adoption was nonetheless intended to satisfy local preferences, and in so doing, help school district relations with the community.

Although parents--unlike students, teachers, and employers--had no direct role in the program, their opinions about EBCE may be a fair reflection of parental attitudes toward school-and-work programs in general. As with so many school matters, parents' views ultimately influence the policies that schools develop for educating and dealing with youth. Administrators found that parental attitudes toward the program provided a major endorsement for the schools. EBCE particularly helped improve the district's image with those of this group whose children had school histories of continuous conflict and little success. The program thus helped to win over many parents who had formerly had little reason to support the schools.

Most parents of EBCE students were enthusiastic about the program, and judged it to be a positive influence in their children's lives. For many of them, it was the first time their sons and daughters had been happy in school, and this change in the attitude of their offspring was sufficient cause in and of itself for them to endorse EBCE. One New England father, whose son had had little social or academic success in school, reported "nothing but praise for EBCE" because of its impact on his son's attitudes toward school and life in general.

> "He's enthusiastic as all getout about this program. He enjoys getting up in the morning and now he knows he's going to get his diploma." He said that his son seems to enjoy what he's doing in his life now, whereas before he was down on himself and didn't have much enthusiasm at all.[24]

A California parent, who is a middle-school librarian in the district, echoed these sentiments.

> "I am delighted that [my daughter] is in EBCE. I think that if she had stayed in the regular school, she would have let her work slide, and really wouldn't have done anything. Now she's getting out of school and seeing adults doing things that interest her. It's a real eye-opener for her . . . . She's so enthusiastic . . . she hasn't been so excited about school for a long, long time. She's happy and she seems more self-confident now than she used to be. In EBCE she's not always in the teacher-student/mother-child relationship, but now is able to assume some of the roles and behavior of adults."[25]

Our field notes on this interview reflected on this parent's comments:

> [This mother] has summed up here, in her views about why she likes the program, views that are commonly expressed by many parents we talk to. Her daughter seems happy, and more enthusiastic about school than she has been in a long time.[26]

It is interesting that while both students and parents endorsed EBCE, they did so for quite different reasons. Students liked the program for a great many reasons: its novelty and variety, the opportunity to pursue uncommon personal or career interests, the escape from dull classrooms and

boring lectures, the sense of belonging, the chance to find part-time jobs. Most parents had different priorities. They liked it because their children did, and because it met the typical parental expectations of schooling. They wanted their children to stay in school, earn diplomas, get good grades, and be well prepared to enter college or get a good job. Parents were thus more likely to focus on traditional school arrangements and results than on the benefits of the community experiences--unless a connection could be demonstrated between the latter and in-school performance.

> [A father] looks on EBCE as a lifesaver. "[My son has] always been a bad student--I don't know how he got this far in school . . . . [he] used to get all D's and F's in his subjects; now he gets C's and B's . . . . Before, all he cared about was quitting school; . . . now [he] is planning for his future . . . . He wants to go to a culinary school . . . . Here's a boy that wanted to quit school last year, and now he wants to go on to more school."[27]

> [Another parent] began our interview by exclaiming, "Hats off to this program!" She thinks it's a great program for a child like her son . . . . "He has grown up this past year, and his grades have increased."[28]

In that district, an EBCE father wished that the district had started the program two years earlier, as it might have helped his older son, who had dropped out of school at that time. His personal story was one of high job mobility as a young adult, and he saw EBCE as a way to help his boys and others avoid that early work pattern:

> "What [EBCE] means is that students will not have to go from job to job after they leave school to find out what it is that they want to do with their lives."

He was glad to see that the schools are now "on the right track."[29]

A mother voiced similar sentiments. There had been an open house at the school for EBCE parents, and she had heard the opinions of some of

them. "Generally, they said that if it weren't for this program, their kids would have left school and would never graduate."[30] Another mother, whose daughter was "practically a straight A student," supported the program for a different reason: "I knew that EBCE would be an opportunity for Sally to have a potpourri of experiences. She's in this program because she's through with her academic requirements, and it was very tempting for her to leave school early to go to college." She gave credit for the program's success to the new superintendent and to the program staff--one of whom she had supported in his bid for a seat on the board of education.[31]

Many parents reported initial skepticism about the worth of the program and their children's decision to enroll, because of the time spent outside the classroom and the school; but their disapproval faded once better attendance or grades followed, or when their children's attitudes toward school improved.

> [A mother described] how her daughter became involved in EBCE. "[She's] the one who decided that she wanted to get into the program. She had been a very good student until she started high school--honors program, advanced classes and all that . . . . [Then] she lost interest in school completely, started doing very badly and started missing classes. It was a complete waste . . . . Nothing seemed to do any good. Then she came to us with the idea of going into EBCE. We thought it was a dumb idea. We opposed it. Our initial reaction was not to let her . . . but she was determined and we agreed to let her try it conditionally."
>
> I asked her how the program had affected her daughter. "The change has been remarkable. She is taking two courses in the regular program--advanced math and language--and getting A's in both of them. She's doing very well in EBCE--they're producing a play on their own and she's done some work and is incredibly well-organized--she keeps a calendar that would put anyone to shame. We're just delighted. She's meeting her goals. She's responsible. A complete change."[32]

The role EBCE has in promoting a positive image of the schools was perhaps

summed up by one superintendent:

> "EBCE is good public relations for the school. Parents of many of the EBCE students have had nothing but bad experiences with the school. Suddenly this changes. Parents who used to be complainers and critics suddenly find that school is working for their child, and they become great supporters of the program and the school district administration."[33]

As an interesting footnote to this discussion of parents' reactions to the new school-and-work program, the parent-child relationship sometimes improved once the youngster enrolled in EBCE. Most parents did not directly relate EBCE to a reduction of tensions at home, but program staff and field interviewers cited many instances where this seemed to be the case. One mother discussed the reversal of her attitude toward EBCE in conjuntion with improved relations at home:

> At the start, "I was very definitely against [the program] but agreed to let [my daughter] join it, because how can you tell a 17-year-old that she can't do something that she wants to do? But I was afraid that she would miss out on the basics . . . things like math, algebra, English, that we thought she needed because we had had them . . . . But we've learned that there's more to going to school than the basics, and besides she's not missing them, she's just learning them in a different way. In addition, we've seen her change enormously . . . . Two years ago I'd ask her if she'd done her homework and she'd say she's going to get to it im a while. Now . . . we don't ask her any more and her teachers don't ask either." Why the change, I asked? "She started talking about school after about six months in the program, and so we started listening. There was a real change."[34]

Commenting on this exchange, the field interviewer made the following observation:

> "I'm not exactly sure what the lines of connection are here, but [this mother] seems to be getting at something we've observed before--that once a student begins to do school work and feel better about school, parents don't worry about it as much . . . and this seems to set in motion a positive rather than a negative cycle, and relationships im the family improve."[35]

In one family, the connection between the program and improved family relations was more explicit. As recorded in our field notes:

> [The program director] told of one boy who had the technical writing skills of a sixth grader. [The director] didn't have [enough] time to work with him . . . so he went to the boy's parents, and the mother is now working with him daily, helping him to prepare an outline for his journal entry, which he then writes and passes in. [There had been] monumental problems between the parents and the boy, who was on the verge of moving out before this project began. "But once this program with his mother started, things improved enormously at home and the boy started picking up his room and not talking back and getting along better at home. His mother said that she had never had a chance to get to know her son, and this provided them with a way to get together."[36]

Another angle on improved relationships at home was offered by a school superintendent who observed that, once in the program, some students relieved their parents of a constant battle with the school:

> [According to the superintendent], there is strong demand for the program and on the whole parents seem to favor it . . . [although] the reasons are not always the right ones. Some parents like the program because . . . the school is no longer hassling them about their children. Since the pressure is off them because their children are out in the community and no longer a source of trouble in school, the parents think the program is great . . . . "They're off the hook every bit as much as their kids are . . . . [I] think parents also like the program because their children are achieving for the first time in school."[37]

By and large, then, parental and community endorsement of EBCE was strong. The community at large liked the program for a variety of reasons; parents liked it because their children's grades or their attitudes toward school improved, as did their prospects of graduating. As a result, district administrators found that EBCE was a welcomed innovation and a boon to school districts' image. The thrust of the tributes to EBCE was that it improved education, not that it delegated educational responsibility to the community.

While many liked the program's work component, they related it to the schools' academic agenda--to grades, diplomas, and preparation for further schooling. They wanted schooling to occur within the context of work, and at the same time they wanted the schools to continue doing what schools are supposed to do. This attitude was mirrored by many administrators, school board members, and the EBCE staff itself, and reinforced the tendency of EBCE to be dominated by the traditional scholastic and academic school functions. Non-school program objectives became secondary, and were mostly left in the hands of employers.

Managing Federal and State Requirement

EBCE also helped district administrators satisfy a variety of federal and state requirements which have been imposed on local districts in recent years. Some of these were designed to meet the needs of special groups of students, and others to improve the quality of education in general. Several states, for example, had recently adopted new diploma requirements for career exploration and the demonstration of practical skills or life competencies. According to one EBCE program director, "EBCE will now meet the new graduation requirements for career exploration experience . . . [which] can take place any time during the high school years. [It] can be paid or unpaid work, work exploration, volunteer service, or a special academic program or project which is in a field that a student in interested in, and which draws on things that come from outside the school."[38] EBCE could accommodate each of these alternatives. This staff member thought that the EBCE project component was particularly helpful, since it could be used with those students

whose parents did not want them to work or explore work outside school. Instead, they could use the local library to do work-related reports following the project format. In her view, "these graduation requirements, which must be met by all students before they can receive a diploma, do increase the likelihood of EBCE's persistence. The program provides several vehicles for kids to meet this requirement."[39]

In Pennsylvania, which requires districts to develop programs for gifted students, EBCE was used for this purpose.[40] And in states where the provisions of ESEA Title IX are taken seriously, EBCE demonstrated the elimination of sex bias by placing students in jobs traditionally held by the opposite sex.[41]

In some districts, faced with actual or imminent court orders to desegregate, EBCE's use as a magnet program removed the threat of intervention. According to the principal in one such magnet school, the reason for adopting EBCE was quite straightforward. Field notes on the conversation record the following:

> The motive was desegregation, pure and simple . . . . [HEW] saw [the school] as a clear case of racial isolation and made it clear that something had to be done about it--just what, was unclear. The school board never got involved in the adoption decisions . . . because it was essentially a reallocation decision and not a new program . . . . It was clear that EBCE was the solution to the desegration problem--nothing very elegant about the search procedure; they liked what they saw and decided it was what they needed.[42]

Most recently, EBCE has been adapted for use with handicapped youth or those with other special needs, thus helping districts satisfy mainstreaming requirements under PL 94-142. In one district, which for several years has used EBCE for drop-out prevention, efforts were under way to extend it to other target populations. The program director reported that because EBCE

material and procedures were designed for individual instruction, they could be easily adapted for use as individual programs for special-needs students, as required under PL 94-142.[43] Indeed, one of the laboratories that developed EBCE recently surveyed the 173 school districts known to have EBCE programs and found that 56 of them were serving special-needs students in one capacity or another.[44] In all of these various ways, then, EBCE made it possible for districts to comply with state and federal directives which have been put forth in recent years.

Declining Budgets and Enrollments

In a period of sharply declining enrollment, many administrators found that EBCE also helped with the district's need for funds. Districts could let students out of classes and yet keep them on the rolls to attract state ADA funds; they could staff EBCE programs with tenured teachers or other school personnel no longer needed; and they became eligible for various state categorical funds and--with modest alterations--for vocational education add-on funds.

In one Western district, the director of secondary education said:

> "We are not a grantsman district. We don't go after programs for the money, but only go after programs that will fit into something we want to do. If we can find a way to meet our needs with the programs that the government has available, then we do our darndest to try to get on board that ship."[45]

One such need was a career education program for 10th grade students.[46] Another involved retaining the high school guidance staff, who were threatened by budget cuts, in part because of uncertainty surrounding their role. According to the top district administrator responsible for both guidance and career education, who was also the EBCE director:

> "[The district] has moved away from more recent roles of counselors as therapists. We . . . mostly have counselors working with students in small groups around practical issues, such as future plans, academic programs, attitudes, and so forth . . . . This is partly because each of the two guidance counselors . . . had 800 students. A few years ago, in a budget squeeze, people decided we could get along without guidance counselors, and in the district next door, they were completely eliminated . . . but things are turning around now, so that everybody wants more counselors in the district. But there isn't really the money to pay for them right now, so the guidance part of EBCE is worth its weight in gold."[47]

This administrator saw possibilities in EBCE when she first heard about it. She applied for VEA Part D funding--a $350,000 three-year grant--to support EBCE as a district-wide program for high school sophomores. This closed the remaining gap in the district's extensive K-12 career education program and incidentally made it possible to retain the guidance personnel. Despite the district's commitment to career education, the vicissitudes of district finances might have precluded EBCE implementation on such a large scale, and involving so many counselors, absent federal support:

> "We might have tried to do it on our own, or used a few of the main concepts. But with so many demands on the school budget, it would have been a big struggle and things would have moved more slowly--if at all."[48]

In a neighboring district in the same state, EBCE was adopted as an alternative program in one of the four local high schools. According to its director of vocational and career education, the district "wanted to develop alternative programs because of our high drop-out rates, which are alarming," and the associated problem of teacher employment. "The drop-out rate as well as emigration from the district to the suburbs was producing a surplus of teachers. Since we couldn't do anything about students and their families moving away, . . . we thought that maybe we could keep both kids and

teachers in school by coming up with some sort of alternative program."[49] In the school which had adopted EBCE, the principal spoke of their decisions for staffing the new program: "We were overstaffed . . . and we felt confident that we had good people within the building who could do the job."[50] EBCE thus drew state drop-out funds to the school, and helped to defer the painful and problematic process of RIFing.

In an Eastern district where declining enrollments are also a serious concern, the high school's vice-principal said, "There's a real possibility that teachers could be assigned one period a day to EBCE, to help out with EBCE duties. The board and the community would have to buy an arrangement like that . . . . Teachers have to sort of keep up with the times, and departments in the school have to make changes to adapt to declining enrollments."[51] In this district, EBCE had a long waiting list and appeared to be far more popular with students than many of the traditional academic electives available.

In an East Coast district, the program was initially adopted as the mainstay in the new superintendent's education platform. He hoped that it would not only reduce the drop-out rate and improve the schools' image in the community and the region, but would generate some money for the district as well. The assistant superintendent thus designed a strategy to draw students from surrounding districts into a regional EBCE program--a plan which was awarded a three-year $350,000 VEA Part D grant. The assistant superintendent's explanation of why they had decided to involve other districts in the local EBCE program is recorded in our field notes:

> One of the reasons . . . was to ensure that the program would not be terminated. There are two ways they think this can

> work. One is that students who are outside the district can come into the local school and participate in the program, their home district paying a tuition of $1,111. This will help to support the program financially. But it will also serve as an important public relations effort for the district. It will help put it on the education map for the state education agency.[52]

In this district, EBCE not only drew a substantial federal grant, but also was designed to attract other external funds and to strengthen the district's reputation in the process.

EBCE was used to generate other state and federal monies as well. Even during its early years--and even more so by 1980--most of the districts met the bulk of the program costs from local budgets. But as other monies became available, or districts discovered that with some staffing or program modifications EBCE was eligible for categorical support, the funding sources for local programs proliferated. Many programs continued with local support, but increasingly that support was supplanted or supplemented with state and federal funds targeted for special purposes or populations.

In one Western district, where drop-out prevention or alternative programs of any sort were not much favored by local residents or the school board, EBCE was expected to persist because it was determined to be a real money-maker for the district. The project director reported that the program was staffed with teachers certified in vocational education, thus qualifying it for vocational education add-on funds, which amounted to half again the per-pupil support provided by the state for those in traditional programs.[53]

Summary

In these various ways, then, EBCE was useful to district administrators for dealing with perennial problems and those of more recent vintage. It

facilitated the management of problem students and their academic progress by providing a legitimate alternative to conventional programs unable to accommodate the unconventional needs of some students. It helped to get these students through school, in part by getting them out of it. And EBCE worked for administrators in other ways as well: it proved to be a successful public relations device in many districts by symbolizing the school's commitment to a no-frills, practical approach to schooling. For this reason or for reasons related to their children's new successes and accomplishments, EBCE won over many local parents and residents who had long been critical of local schools. EBCE also helped administrators meet a variety of federal and state requirements for new programs or special populations, and it proved useful as a fund-raising device and a temporary reprieve from the effects of declining enrollments and surplus staff. In virtually every district visited, EBCE was useful to district administrators for one or some combination of the reasons just described. These uses were not necessarily designed to forge a balanced partnership with employers or to invite their collaboration with educators; rather, they were shaped largely by the traditional responsibilities and functions of school administrators.

Teachers in the Community

Teachers, like administrators, critically influence the local evolution of educational reforms. How they interpret and use a new program has a major influence on its development, and ultimately on its perceived success. Here too, the formal goals of a program tend to take second place to its ability to satisfy professional demands and preferences. In the case of EBCE, most teachers involved were enthusiastic fans of the innovation; but the reasons

had more to do with satisfying teacher needs than with the intended community and employer collaboration which the program required. Teachers liked EBCE because it freed them from the standard regulations and constraints of the school and afforded them a great deal of leeway for satisfying their work interests. Because EBCE was a bundle of novel practices, it provided a free zone in the school, a orogram area in which traditional classroom practice and teacher and student roles were not appropriate. Because the new roles and practices were complex and not well defined or understood, rules governing the program required some time to evolve. In the meantime, EBCE in effect operated in a bureaucratic vacuum. And in this vacuum, many different interpretations of roles and rules were possible, thus permitting many unconventional activities to occur.

Also like administrators, teachers frequently used the program to resolve problems related to their work--problems involving instructional settings, course content, ways of interacting with students, and pedagogical style. Because EBCE permitted great variation in these domains, teachers were able to create the variant that was most suited to their professional goals and interests. Thus, teachers who prefer working with students individually rather than instructing large classes chose teaching arrangements emphasizing student projects. Some teachers cared less about teaching arrangements and more about what the program taught; they used EBCE to emphasize instruction in basic skills or jobs and careers, thus shaping the program to their vision of what good education should include. Other teachers believed that EBCE should provide students with opportunities for personal growth and problem solving; they stressed its developmental aspects. And some teachers, who wanted to help faltering students graduate or find work

in particular careers, or to teach courses not available in the school's curriculum, used EBCE to pursue these goals.

If teachers had varying preferences, it might be expected that they would attend to different aspects of the innovation with varying degrees of intensity. In fact, this is precisely what occurred: teachers put more effort and time into those parts of the new job that either were familiar--such as teaching subjects--or that were exciting and had not been possible in traditional school--such as individual instruction. Academics and pedagogical style, the school-based aspects of the program, thus received far more attention, and its community-oriented elements far less, than had been outlined by the program models. In most instances, the priorities of the school staff relegated the development and maintenance of the partnership with employers to a relatively low place in the new scheme of things. And even when school staff were highly motivated to work for school-community collaboration, the new tasks proved so formidable and so time-consuming that responsibility for students' community experiences largely reverted to employers. Teachers paid attention to school, and employers to the workplace.

In some ways, we might expect schoolpeople to have little trouble learning new tasks. After all, teachers are often being retrained, or are learning new teaching styles, or are asked to adopt new materials and methods. Indeed, since innovation in schools has been quite common in recent years, teachers in EBCE might have been expected to be at least somewhat used to change. Moreover, the staff in most EBCE programs were self-selected and presumably knew what changes would be required; and most of them reported a strong affinity for the educational and work-related

goals that EBCE had set out to attain. But EBCE differed from other school programs in a way that taxed the energy and confidence of many teachers. Its heavy emphasis on the community not only guaranteed that students would experience the non-school world; it also put school staff on the front lines of contact with that other world. Many teachers reported that the greatest challenge and difficulty in the new role was initiating contact with the community and collaborating with employers and workers. For most, this was hard to learn.

Problems of site development surfaced quickly in most programs, as teachers began to recruit a pool of employers large and diverse enough to provide a smorgasbord of occupational offerings to students. As was predicted by the developers, site recruitment and analysis often became the overriding concern during the early months of the program. Some districts hired community specialists to enlist employers and placements, but in most cases the start-up chores were left to the program staff. Laboratory materials and training had been provided, but despite that help, many districts were not entirely successful. Some programs corrected the imbalances in site placement over the first few months or years, but others reported never quite dealing with the problem to their satisfaction. From the field notes on a district we visited during its second year:

> Enrollment in EBCE is up to 235 students from 90 last year and these students have access to [only] 25 sites. . . . [The site coordinator] knows that he needs more, but he says he hasn't the time to go out and develop sites, that there aren't many to develop because the community is rural, that he doesn't like making cold calls to people without an introduction or third party contact, and that he prefers not to deal with large businesses. This is a sizeable list of impediments to site development, and no doubt helps to explain why he's only operating with 25 at present.[54]

Most programs managed to get enough sites to place most students but were short on certain types of placement. Small business and public sector placements dominated the EBCE rosters, while manufacturing and large (especially national) retail businesses were more difficult to recruit. A number of reasons were offered to explain this gap, among them union resistance to unpaid students in the workplace, bureaucratic delays and layers of red tape in the approval process, and safety considerations. The learning coordinators of one site explained why their program included no industrial sites. From our field notes:

> First . . . the biggest employer in the area told them that there were problems with having people under 18 around a plant . . . for both insurance and safety reasons. The second reason had to do with organized labor. A third reason was that [the program] as yet had no advisory council [that could facilitate] contacts with the business community. One of the learning coordinators told of going to see one of the top people in industry but never getting past the secretary, and then upon returning, being sent to see . . . a public relations person. She seemed to be uncertain about how to handle this, and has not gone back.[55]

Thus the inherent difficulty of recruiting large businesses and industry was exacerbated by teachers' acknowledged diffidence in unfamiliar spheres. The EBCE staff, quickly dissuaded by frustration, often gave up after an initial rebuff or two. Many said it was easier to make contacts through friends and acquaintances who were professionals, owned small businesses, or worked in city or county offices than to secure placements in larger, more bureaucratic sites in the private sector. According to one site coordinator who did not like working with large corporations:

> "The larger the corporation, the more difficult time the site coordinator has. [One reason is that] policy in those places is made by some guy at the top who sits behind a teak desk, but it has to be put up with by a guy at the bottom who sits

> behind a formica-top desk. [Another reason is that] you have to be more solicitous with the large corporations than with the small. The mom and pop organizations are more straightforward with you. A guy can get in touch with me by a phone call if he has a question or a gripe."[56]

Another site coordinator in a medium-sized Western city, who had developed many site placements but few in the industrial sector, said:

> "Ninety percent of the sites have been developed through contacts I had in the community. When I didn't have contacts, it took lots of time in terms of ingratiating myself to the resource people . . . . In the long run, if I didn't have friends in the right spots, I never would have gotten anywhere."[57]

Staff diffidence in dealing with the community was also apparent in their interaction with employers once the program was under way. Although, as the developers had urged, teachers and employers reportedly agreed at the outset about what students would do in their site placements, these informal contracts were mostly vague and open to interpretation. One school resource specialist reported:

> "About 85% of the site experiences are developed by me, but it varies . . . because sometimes the site people would like to do it themselves. I usually go in and talk with the top management and find out what sorts of jobs are available. Then I quickly either agree or disagree. That's usually the way it's done. What actually goes on during the day is something we don't really know a lot about."[58]

Another resource specialist explained that once he was able to place a student, he let the site person take over and had little to do with the day-to-day activities of the student.[59] A community site coordinator summed up his philosophy on the school-work partnership this way:

> "In the majority of the [sites], I give them free rein. I don't write things down for them to do with the kids. I'm diametrically opposed to too much intervention by the school system."[60]

Although the learning coordinator was ultimately responsible for the site activities of students, these activities did not always turn out to be what the EBCE teachers had expected. While some teachers then renegotiated student activities with the employer, many hesitated to do so because it might imply criticism of the employers and the role they had worked out for students at the site. Since EBCE depended on the sites for program operation, and since it had often been a struggle to recruit the sites in the first place, EBCE staff generally reported that they feared alienating employers and losing site placements--which sometimes occurred. In some cases, then, teachers acquiesced to activities they judged not in the spirit of EBCE, because they dared not run the risk of losing that site or damaging relations with the employer.

Similarly, the EBCE staff did very little training of employers--although orientation in the goals and methods of EBCE was to have been part of the reform, according to the implementation materials the labs provided school districts. Staff quickly learned that most employers saw little need for formal training sessions, or said that they were too busy to attend, or assigned students to so many different employees that training them all was impractical. One project director described this problem as follows:

> The community board has told us that they want structure from us to help guide the students in the sites, but it takes a lot of time to develop that. We've tried to run employer workshops for other programs, and when we go to sign up people, they say that they'll come. But when the day arrives, they don't.[61]

The field notes report the situation at another site, where the resource person had inherited the assignemnt from a boss who had gone on to another position:

> The EBCE kids are received and processed by the training and personnel department of this giant corporation, and then dispersed throughout the departments of the plant; the people who end up working with [them] have no idea of the program's intent or purposes, and no contact with anyone from EBCE or the high school. So there are several levels in the corporate bureaucracy, and by the time kids filter down to the actual desk or office [where] they spend their two or three weeks, they're a long way from people who know about EBCE.[62]

In every program that had intended to train employers, EBCE staff changed their plans and instead relied on face to face conversations to convey a sense of the program, its purposes, and its expectations. In some cases this was sufficient; in others, once students were on site, employers were still not sure what to do with them and asked the school for more guidance. Other employers used trial and error and eventually worked out a program on their own. In general, once employers had accepted students, the EBCE staff gave them free rein in working out site activities.

After site recruitment, the main occasion for contact between teachers and employers was the site visiting or monitoring activity of the EBCE staff. The lab materials called for teachers to visit sites regularly to meet with employers, observe student and employer activities, and check on student performance. However, sites were not visited as frequently as planned, and site visiting tended to be used more for public relations for the program than to monitor site activity. From our field notes:

> One EBCE staffer said that 95% of the resource people had a "good" reaction to the program, but unfortunately there was a problem with his relationship with them because "I did not spend as much time as I would like to" with them. A car was available to the staff but only limited mileage could be put on it. He was always being told by the secretary to keep the mileage down, yet he saw visiting as essential to his job as a site analyst. He sees his role as one of public relations as well as placement, and it was difficult to do this without spending time with the resource people themselves.[63]

In the site visits we observed, teachers usually talked briefly with employers about student attendance, performance, and behavior; new student placements; and what, if anything could be done to make the employer's job easier. Although contact was maintained, it was virtually always initiated by the schools and it was brief. From our field notes:

> [One staff member responsible for sites reported] that she herself often did not visit the sites, other than making the initial contact. . . . Once the students were there, the learning coordinator "usually visited the sites and talked to the people out there; yet I believe it is most of the time by phone, because business people don't have much time."[64]

But although schoolpeople were often hesitant to bother busy employers, many community people were distressed by the infrequent contact, and some say it as a major program oversight, as did this employer:

> A major criticism I have of the program is what seems to me a complete lack of adult interaction and supervision. In the two years I have been associated with the program, not a single adult from the program has come to see me. A student shows up, does a program, and disappears, and I don't know what's come of it.[65]

Thus, EBCE teachers did little to press the kind of collaborative relationship that was outlined in laboratory dissemination materials. They were reluctant to impose program goals on cooperating employers, or to question what employers did with students--in short, to intrude into the business world, a domain outside their area of expertise and comfort. Instead, they left the business of the workplace to employers and concentrated on the parts of the program that involved work with students while students were in the school building. Over time, teachers reported that as they came to know employers better, they dealt more directly with ways to improve students' site exoeriences. But the subject has remained an uneasy one, and the basic division of labor still holds.

The Employer Working with Schools

If EBCE teachers had problems adjusting to their new role in the community, participating employers had equal difficulty working with teachers. Just as few teachers were eager to intervene in the world of work, few employers were willing to take on the tasks of the school. In a way, this isn't surprising. The feasibility studies which preceded EBCE's development had demonstrated that employers did not want to assume primary responsibility for students and their formal instruction. Largely as a result of these studies, EBCE was developed as a school-based rather than employer-based program; but it was nonetheless premised on the willingness of employers to work seriously with schools in the interests of providing rigorous career education for students.

The employers were reportedly willing to try. As part of their agreement with the schools, they were to provide students with experience and training and information about their jobs and careers, and in addition were to cooperate with school staff in planning site experiences and coordinating the program's community component. But despite these agreements and the genuine enthusiasm with which employers welcomed the program, most had problems fulfilling their part of the bargain. They treated the youngsters as students rather than young employees; they deferred to the school on such matters as discipline, deportment, and formal assessment of student work; and they eschewed supervisory responsibility for what students learned at work. In brief, most employers treated the students as if they were visitors or short-term trainees--which they were--and did not expose them to the real pressures and demands of the workplace.

The reluctance of the community to work closely with schools and take on instructional tasks paralleled the schools' disinclination to become involved in work. But the flawed partnership and the vagueness of the relationship that replaced it may have made the program more attractive to potential employer-participants. In almost every program we visited, employers reported a high regard for EBCE's goals and purposes as they understood them, telling us that they really believed in "programs of this type." Because terms and conditions were not clearly spelled out, employers could interpret the program to match their own preferences. They were free to decide what form of involvement suited them--what they would let students do on site, and how much time, attention, and supervision they would provide. This depended partly on the sort of work that was available for students to do, an assessment of their enthusiasm and commitment to learning it, and the press of work that required employers' attention; but mainly, it reflected the reasons why employers had initially agreed to participate in the program.

Some employers welcomed EBCE because they liked the idea of working with young people, a few because they wanted to teach. Others gave purely practical reasons: they wanted the free help students provided, or saw a chance to screen or train older students for future employment. Some liked it because it enhanced the company's image locally, and others because it enabled them to correct what they perceived to be youth's misapprehensions about some jobs and professions. Their participation sprang from many motives, but these did not necessarily include a wish to collaborate with schools or to become involved in work with schoolpeople. Indeed, it appeared that employers viewed the program as the child of the schools and primarily the schools' responsibility. They defined collaboration as putting youngsters to work

or permitting them to observe it. Most did not view collaboration as becoming involved in student discipline and behavior, or in formally assessing student work or assigning grades.

In addition, employers seemed not to understand that a two-way communication between the community and the schools was intended. Many employers complained of lack of contact with program staff, but they spoke as though this was the schools' shortcoming. As one employer reported of a student:

> The thing that really concerns me is that no one from the school ever checked on her while she was here. She wrote a paper which I understand was very good, but I never saw it. We have a lot of dealings with graduate students doing clinical practice here, and our relationship with the schools is usually very good. I think the EBCE program could use our input.[66]

This employer, like others, believed that his "input" should be solicited rather than volunteered. Similarly, while many employers were in a quandary about what to do with students once they arrived at the site, it was rare for them to call the schools for help, clarification, or ideas for a productive course of action. One employer, who stood out as an exception to this rule, reported the following:

> "Last year we had a boy, but we didn't know what to expect of the program. I figure it costs $1,000 a day in staff time to have kids come in, so I called [the EBCE director] . . . . We didn't know what demands we could make . . . . I needed to know more about the kid and what the kid expects from us. Otherwise, they just end up standing around or my men end up giving them instructions, and it's pretty much a waste of time on our part. So . . . this year, when the kids come in, we sit them down, explain the safety rules, tell them they must have boots and work clothes, and stuff like that. Last year we were timid. Now we know that we can expect things of the program and of the students." [67]

But more commonly, employers who needed help did not request it. One employer explained why:

> "For the most part, I think the teachers are textbook oriented, and so they don't really know what's going on out here in the business world. I tell them that our first purpose is to make money--that we're not a non-profit organization. But in reality, the teachers don't know what's going on, so that affects the quality of these assignments."[68]

Regardless of the reasons--whether employers believed that the schools should initiate contact or lacked confidence in the ability of teachers to provide help--the overwhelming majority of community participants in EBCE made few efforts to communicate or maintain contact with the schools.

Other features of the desired partnership did not fare much better. Early visions of collaboration had presumed that employers would handle students' misbehavior in the workplace, and evaluate their work. Evaluation by employers had seemed critical if work was to count for grades and credits, since they alone could assess the quality of students' work performance. Although teachers were to visit the sites, they weren't expected to spend the time necessary for assessment, nor indeed were they expected to be sufficiently familiar with the standards of work performance. For the purpose of formal grading, employers would provide the schools with written evaluations of student work as well as reports on attendance and deportment. Such expectations were intact when EBCE was first implemented by school districts, as a laboratory guide for employer resource persons made clear in 1976. Under the heading "What exactly am I supposed to do with the student?", the guide answers, in part, that employers should evaluate student progress:

> Third, you can fill out the "Student Evaluation Form." This form should be given to you by the LC the first day of the student's placement. The "Student Evaluation Form" allows you to indicate a student's progress while with you

> and also, to indicate his or her attendance. You should also call the LC should any problems arise regarding continued tardiness or absence. The form should be returned to the LC. If a student is with you for more than three weeks, it would be helpful if you filled out a second form.[69]

As EBCE was implemented in local sites, however, it became clear that employers were seldom involved in formal assessment and only marginally in the grading process. Sometimes they were asked to complete checklists or other program forms on students' work attitudes and attendance, but they did not know how these were used by teachers or whether they entered into the assignment of final grades. From the field notes of several interviews with community employers:

> I evaluate each students' performance with him before he leaves, but I've never been asked formally by EBCE people to make a statement about a student's work. I never hear from people who evaluate the projects.[70]

> [An employer], asked how students were assigned grades for the work they do in her office, [said] that she had no knowledge of that. "I don't know how they're graded back at the high school."[71]

> At mid-semester, [a student's] learning coordinator . . . asked [the employer] to fill out a student evaluation form, where she was to check off on a scale of five or six such things as dependability, willingness to take suggestions, neatness and accuracy of work, appropriateness of questions, and so forth. She showed this to me and it was rudimentary; but it was an evaluation form.[72]

Although some employers were curious about the disposition of requested evaluations, most were skeptical about their use for grading, and some felt they were pro forma. One employer reported that his evaluation forms were to be hand-carried to the school by the student, raising in his mind the question how honestly he was expected to complete it, and thus how seriously its use was intended.[73] Such conversations conveyed a clear impression

that the evaluation of student work was not a subject which teachers and employers discussed; indeed, most employers appeared not to want to take part in formal evaluation and grading. From our field notes:

> [The employer] volunteered that he was not sure he would like to be involved in grading . . . . He would want the schools to have tight control of grading--that is, he doesn't know whether the grade is being assigned for math or for English or for what, and he'd need to know a lot more before he could do it.[74]

In the area of formal student assessment and grading, then, as in matters involving discipline, employers were reluctant to be involved more than superficially. This reaction comes as no surprise for several reasons. First, while employers have much experience judging workers, they did not regard EBCE students as workers--as in fact, many were not. But even students performed productive work (which they were not supposed to do in EBCE), most employers considered the help a temporary gift of sorts, and thus thought it unfair to judge. Their lack of familiarity and contact with teen-agers, and their uncertainty about how much they could expect, was another reason why they eschewed evaluation. In the absence of clear standards and the necessary experience in training, employers were reluctant to make assessments that might become permanent entries on student records.

But perhaps the chief reason why employers rarely disciplined students or expressed a wish to assess and grade their work was that they viewed EBCE as a school program, and these tasks as the responsibility of schools. Employers felt neither qualified nor competent to intervene in these traditional school domains--nor did they have the time to do so. Just as EBCE teachers and district administrators focused their energy and attention on those aspects of the program which were salient to their professional roles and traditional responsibilities, so community employers related the program

to their role and tradition. They used EBCE in ways which would be useful to the business or would provide personal satisfaction. Many employers were committed to helping youngsters learn about work. But they held a traditional view regarding responsibility for the program and the students. The program was initiated by schools, and employers viewed their participation in it as voluntary--which it was and always has been for programs of this sort. There were few strong incentives for employers to take part, and even fewer to encourage the substantial commitment of energy and resources required to make their participation equal to that of the schools. Employers, after all, are in the business of making money and ensuring the economic viability of their firms. They are not in the business of working with teachers, training high school students, providing discipline and social instruction, and evaluating student work. These tasks have traditionally belonged to schools; and so it continued.

Conclusion

In many ways EBCE was influenced by the very special and organizational relationships it set out to change. Like other work-related school programs, it sought to share the responsibility for educating youth with the community by shifting some of the activities of schooling from the school to the workplace. The separation of community and school was to yield to a cooperative partnership that would facilitate community experience for youngsters. But even if that partnership had appealed equally to all the parties, the social division of labor between school and community is so deeply entrenched that the necessary shift in tasks and functions did not occur. Both schoolpeople and employers continued to be preoccupied by their traditional concerns: administrators tended to use EBCE to solve pressing district problems rather

than throwing their full weight behind its formal goals; teachers developed its academic elements far more vigorously than its community component; and employers, driven as much by economic exigencies as by habit and tradition, concentrated on the demands of their business, which were in no way diminished by the program. Program participants thus attended to separate elements of the program, and the result was, at best, a limited partnership.

The limited success of the partnership suggests that there may be a fallacy in the underlying assumptions of the reform. Early EBCE advocates seemed to believe not only that it was a natural--if neglected--function of the community to help schools prepare youth for life, but also that the community would be eager to "reclaim its crucial role in preparing young people to live and work" in today's world.[75] Yet the EBCE experience suggests that on the contrary, most Americans still expect schools to do that job. They believe that the high school should provide all the prepartion, both academic and experiential, that is needed for post-high-school life--whether college or occupation. Although many business, industrial, professional, and government people were willing to give some time to a program of this type, most of them used it as it fit their own personal or organizational agendas. After all, moving high school students out of the schoolhouse was never a business idea in the first place; it originated with educators and social critics. While community people were indeed dissatisfied with the performance of schools in career preparation, they typically expected the schools to do a better job, rather than ask others to do it for them. They were willing, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, to make some contribution to a partnership, but most of them continued to see the education of adolescents as the responsibility of the school, not the community. Thus

the social division of labor prevailed, and overwhelmed most of the new ideas for reforming and improving education with work.

Footnotes to Chapter VI

1. Superintendent, 4/77.
2. Community Resource Person, 2/79.
3. Guidance Counselor, 4/77.
4. Community Coordinator, 4/77.
5. Principal, 4/78.
6. Ibid.
7. Project Director, 4/78.
8. Ibid.
9. Principal, 4/78.
10. EBCE student, 4/78.
11. Project Director, 2/77.
12. Ibid.
13. EBCE student, 3/77.
14. Learning Coordinator, 3/77.
15. Learning Coordinator, 3/77.
16. EBCE student, 3/77.
17. EBCE student, 3/77.
18. Resource Specialist, 2/78.
19. Learning Manager, 4/78.
20. Superintendent, 1/77.
21. Manpower Aide assigned to EBCE, 12/76.
22. Community Resource Person, 4/78.
23. Assistant Superintendent, 5/78.
24. EBCE parent, 1/77.

25. EBCE parent, 12/77.

26. Ibid.

27. EBCE parent, 1/77.

28. EBCE parent, 1/77.

29. EBCE parent, 1/77.

30. EBCE parent, 1/77.

31. EBCE parent, 4/77.

32. EBCE parent, 3/77.

33. Superintendent, 4/77.

34. EBCE parent, 12/77.

35. Ibid.

36. Program Director, 4/78.

37. Superintendent, 4/77.

38. Program Director, 4/78.

39. Ibid.

40. Assistant Superintendent, 12/76.

41. Assistant Superintendent, 5/78.

42. Principal, 3/77.

43. Program Director, 2/79.

44. Evanson, J. and J. Cook, A Nationwide Survey on Participation of Handicapped Students in EBCE. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory, November 1979.

45. Director of Secondary Education, 12/77.

46. Project Director, 12/77.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Director of Vocational and Career Education, 2/77.
50. Principal, 2/77.
51. Vice Principal, 4/77.
52. Assistant Superintendent, 4/77.
53. Project Director, 4/78.
54. Community Site Coordinator, 5/77.
55. Learning Coordinator, 3/77.
56. Community Site Coordinator, 3/77.
57. Resource Analyst, 12/77.
58. Resource Specialist, 12/77.
59. Resource Specialist, 3/78.
60. Community Site Coordinator, 3/77.
61. Project Director, 4/78.
62. Community Resource/Huron Staff, 3/78.
63. Resource Specialist, 12/77.
64. Resource Specialist, 3/78.
65. Community Resource Person, 3/77.
66. Community Resource Person, 3/77.
67. Community Resource Person, 4/78.
68. Community Resource Person, 4/78.
69. "Guide for Resource Persons," Appalachian Educational Laboratory Charleston, West Virginia, January, 1976.
70. Community Resource Person, 3/77.
71. Community Resource Person, 3/77.
72. Community Resource Person, 4/77.

73. Community Resource Person, 4/78.

74. Community Resource Person, 3/77.

75. Johnson, James N., The Feasibility of Employer-Based Career Education: A Summary, Far West Educational Laboratory, February 1973, p. 14.

VII. CONCLUSION: VARIETIES OF SUCCESS

Our discussion of EBCE portrays programs with very mixed results varying from district to district. The reform's initial formal agenda was only imperfectly achieved, partly because its scope and complexity taxed people's ability to rise to it. Instead those elements of the program which were familiar or compatible with personal needs and preferences were selected and implemented while others were ignored or de-emphasized. One result was that the much sought partnership between school and community could not be completely realized, and so EBCE became the responsibility of schools. In practice, it reflected the influence of schoolpeople and the traditions and procedures of school-and-work reforms. EBCE combined in one program many elements of contemporary educational innovations and enabled people to do many things not possible within prevailing school programs. But it did not reform the behavior of many students, and it did not significantly change the schools or the delivery of educational services.

But if EBCE in practice seems disappointing in these ways, it achieved remarkable success by other standards. It was widely adopted; few districts have formally terminated the program thus far, a trend that seems likely to continue; it has been enthusiastically praised by staff, students, and parents; and it has been widely adapted to uses other than those for which it was intended. For example, EBCE staff joined the program as a way to escape from their own boredom and disillusionment with their classroom experience. Students used the program as a way to spend more time with their friends outside school. And parents used the program as a way of encouraging their sons and daughters to stay in school. These motivations, along with others more closely aligned with the program's intentions,

contributed to its popularity.

This popularity is attested to by the fact that in the four years that EBCE has been available, it spread to 130 school districts in 40 states. As of 1978, it involved more than 400 junior high and secondary schools and 10,000 students.[1] In addition, the program has had considerable impact at the state level. As of 1979, 18 state education agencies had formally adopted or endorsed the program and were either developing an internal capacity to help districts with implementation or were promoting its dissemination to cities and towns.[2]

The significance of the spread of EBCE is underscored by evidence of strong state and local commitment.* Federal money, especially Part D of VEA, provided significant funding for EBCE--a mean of $100,000 in 75% of the programs; but well over half of the programs also used local funds.[3] This is surprising, given the fiscal crisis in education, in which many districts were cutting rather than adding programs, the high per-pupil cost (which averaged $2,000), and the relatively small number of students who could be served--fewer than 100 in 75% of the programs:[4] one would think that these limitations would discourage rather than stimulate local activity. In addition, states provided funds, which on the average covered half of the local operating expenses,[5] to over 25% of the programs. In terms of local and state support, EBCE has thus been extremely successful.

Another measure of EBCE's success is its durability. Of all the districts which have adopted EBCE, not more than two, to our knowledge, have

*This growth was still apparent by 1980. In a recent communication with a federal program officer, EBCE was reported to have spread to 200 school districts in 48 states involving more than 20,000 students (Memo of May 25, 1980).

officially terminated the program. In both instances the reason was lack of funding, and both districts reportedly view termination as temporary. And although EBCE is in mothballs in these districts, administrators and former staff reported that parts and pieces of the program, including some of its curriculum materials, were still being used with some students. If persistence thus far in its brief history is a criterion of program success, EBCE has an unusual record, which the districts involved think likely to continue.

Other indices of the program's success include lavish testimonials from the vast majority of staff, students, and parents, and to a lesser degree from employers. School boards and top administrators have demonstrated their approval by committing tight district funds for program costs. Another mark of success is the rise of a self-supporting national EBCE organization, whose paid membership in 1979 numbered nearly 1135 from 38 states, although the group was barely 18 months old.[6] Yet another is the increasing adoption and adaptation of the program for a wide range of populations for whom it was not initially intended--from retired adults to women entering or re-entering the job market, from handicapped youths and adults to those with other needs for special education. Boy Scouts and other groups have adopted parts of the program, and its use at the post-secondary level has proliferated. Even schools of education are using EBCE materials for training teachers for a variety of career education roles. EBCE has become a growth industry, with seemingly endless potential for use by very diverse groups. If these are measures of the program, then EBCE was a success.

We believe that an explanation for that success lies in the convergence of a complex set of social, economic, and educational conditions, which

provided just the right climate for this reform movement to develop. Efforts to combine experiential and academic learning, which have long had an enormous appeal in our society, gained momentum from the ways in which the problems of youth and secondary education had been diagnosed during the 1960s and 1970s, and the federal government's response with a prescription called Career Education. In many respects, career education was a movement whose time had come.

Timeliness of Career Education

Beginning in the early 1960s, a new wave of disenchantment with the behavior of youth began to rise. Commentators criticized teenage attitudes toward school, work, and traditional American values, as demonstrated by Civil Rights protests, school walk-outs, drug use, and promiscuity. Many blamed television, or the youth culture, or the child-rearing practices pushed by Dr. Spock and embraced by a generation of parents; others blamed the schools. If television and parenting could not be reformed, perhaps the schools could be restructured to provide a relevant education in a healthy environment which encouraged responsibility, initiative, and adult behavior, and so reform American youth.

In the years that followed, many of the proposed reforms were tried: alternative schools, participatory governance, modular scheduling, and a raft of new course offerings. But the problems, and the defiant student behavior, continued unabated. The federal proposal of career education as the solution rested on a diagnosis which was by then implicitly understood. Career education promised to help cure the ills of youth and schools by involving youth with working adults in the community.

Because it promised to respond to several problems they thought they

had, state and local districts seized on this latest educational innovation in great numbers, and thus ensured its place among the major school reforms of this half-century. But the reform had problems. One of the biggest was the lack of state and federal funding to support local efforts. Another was the sparsity of program materials, since local districts hadn't the foggiest idea how to achieve career education. And programs for high schools were slow to develop: many educators feared that they would simply duplicate some elements of other work-study programs. Most of the effort therefore went into developing career education at the elementary level, where no work programs existed.

When Experience-Based Career Education became available, it thus had virtually no competition at the secondary level. Even more important, it was one of the most carefully developed high school career education programs, designed and promoted specifically to deal with a wide range of teenage students, whether or not a problem in school. An additional attraction was the availability of laboratory-developed EBCE materials, which made implementation seem considerably less problematic: basic skills curricula and other course syllabi revolving around work, accompanied by elaborate instructions for use; planned student projects for direct use or as guides for local efforts; carefully elaborated procedures for recruiting staff and students, enlisting local employers, and developing community support; staff training and technical assistance material. In sum, EBCE was a very attractive program package, endorsed by various local and national evaluations. For districts searching everywhere for a solution to youth problems, EBCE seemed a ready answer.

EBCE as a Solution to Problems Old and New

But there is more to the story of EBCE's appeal than its timely response to youth problems and its corner on the high school market. These help to explain its wide adoption, but not its remarkable persistence and popularity once installed. In the face of modest achievements with both student and school reform, and despite implementation difficulties, teacher resistance, problems with students' behavior and work performance, and the limited work opportunities provided--why, at the local level, is the program such a smashing success?

The answer lies in the program's great flexibility, which came about largely through the involvement of the community. In a union of academic and experiential learning never before tried in American education, EBCE sought to spur student learning outside the school, with a curriculum not controlled by schoolpeople. The usual requirements for curriculum content and for awarding grades and credits thus could not be strictly applied. Moreover, many school norms on non-academic matters also had to be relaxed, since they could not be imposed on employers' interaction with students. Finally, the integration of work exploration with academic learning is an exceedingly woolly concept, capable of many interpretations. It blurred the boundaries between academic disciplines and unsettled people's notions of what constitutes appropriate or rigorous learning for academic credit. In the midst of this organizational vacuum, while the issue was being debated by those of differing views, EBCE was able to deviate wildly from the standard curriculum, creating new curricula adjusted to what each student was willing and able to do.

In weakening traditional school procedures, EBCE thus allowed districts great latitude in dealing with the problems of educating young people in contemporary society--and with other pressing district problems. It not only provided schools with a new way of managing students, but it helped them deal with the difficult interface between school and community, meet state and federal requirements, attract funds, and the like. Some of these applications were not foreshadowed in the early market appeals of the developers, nor anticipated by the districts themselves. They came about through the enormous adaptability of the program made possible by the work of the developers and the creative thinking of local district staff--aspects of EBCE that contributed significantly to its success. We now discuss in more detail some of the successful ways EBCE was adapted and applied.

Managing Students

In many districts, EBCE enabled schools to deal with disruptive students and those with chronic learning problems. It got students out of regular classes where they made trouble and into self-contained groups isolated from the rest of the school; it provided individual attention and counseling in personal matters, defusing much disruptive behavior or preventing it from getting out of hand; it offered individual instruction and tutoring to guide and monitor student progress toward academic credits and diplomas; and it placed students in the community, away from the familiar constraints of the school. To varying degrees in different districts and schools, EBCE dealt with problem students in all these ways.

These solutions would not have been possible within the context of the traditional school. By drawing students from classes and into the program, schools could circumvent many of the rules and practices meant to apply

uniformly to all students. Thus, for example, schools could provide tailor-made academic help or adjust the content of required courses to help some students graduate, which they could not have done for those same students in regular classes. Or they could sharply reduce the required hours of attendance at the school for EBCE students--to as little as two or three hours per week for limited times in some programs--without jeopardizing their official student status or diplomas. The regulations and rules once devised to protect youth from society--compulsory attendance, required courses and credits--had limited administrators' freedom of action in solving school and district problems. EBCE allowed them to bypass these constraints in a manner both public and legitimate.

Relations between School and Community

Another source of EBCE's appeal to districts was its expressive value. Because EBCE was advertised as a solution to academic problems as well as an introduction to work and careers, its adoption demonstrated to the community that the district was committed to dealing seriously with these matters. EBCE appeared to respond to both the uproar about basic skills and the crisis of youth unemployment, and so met districts' ever-present concern about their image in the community. The schools' initiative to involve local businesses and employers with education also enhanced community relations. In a sense, EBCE helped to hook schools to the community, and in the process to make schools seem less remote, more serious about their responsibilities, and more amenable to community influence and control. Even employers who shied away from involvement were left with the impression that the schools were more accessible, and, more important, that they depended upon the community to improve the quality of education. In at least the symbolic

sense, this shifted some of the responsibility for education from the schools to the community. According to district staff, employers, and parents, many of those who had been hostile or indifferent to the schools developed a more favorable attitude, largely owing to their contact with the schools through the program.

Community participation in the program thus helped to win endorsements for the school, and tributes from pleased parents and local employers who, as noted in earlier chapters, had various personal reasons for supporting EBCE. Such endorsements are not a minor matter on a school district's agenda. Administrators are constantly seeking ways to build support and ward off criticiam--tasks which have seemed especially difficult in these times of rising costs, declining enrollments, and Proposition 13. Among public services, education budgets are particularly vulnerable, and they have not been helped by daily news reports on how public education is failing the nation's young. Programs like EBCE that are strongly endorsed locally are a public relations bonanza for administrators pressed from every side, helping them to manage what is at best an uneasy relationship with the community.

Managing Federal and State Requirements

Two important reasons for the program's success, then, were the flexibility it provided for managing students and its effectiveness in managing school and community relations. Historically, both have been persistent concerns in school districts, and programs that respond to them assume a special status. But EBCE also responded to other district problems, such as drop-out prevention, concentrated basic skills instruction, and compliance with federal and state requirements to meet the needs of special

groups, improve the quality of education in general, or provide alternatives to traditional programs. In many respects, it became an all-purpose modular program. Depending on the particular local configuration desired, it was adopted in whole or in part, with greater attention to some components than others. Since federal and state mandates typically specified little beyond the population to be served, and since EBCE could serve many groups, the program frequently met several requirements at once, which considerably simplified the problems of compliance for local administrators. If EBCE had few strong competitors in the career education domain, there were also few programs to match the variety and versatility of its possible applications.

Attracting State and Federal Funds

In addition to all of these problems in need of solutions, schools have further troubles precipitated by unprecedented enrollment declines and financial difficulties which are likely to persist at least in the short run. In their efforts to manage the institution through a period of social and financial change with the least ill effects, many administrators discovered that EBCE solved several problems involving students, teachers, and the district's need for new revenues. Districts faced with high drop-out rates and student dissatisfaction with traditional schooling found that EBCE provide' a way to let students out of traditional classes and school while keeping them on the rolls to generate state ADA funds. Other districts experiencing either sharp enrollment declines or declining student interest in some courses or disciplines found that they could staff EBCE programs with tenured teachers no longer needed in classrooms. Administrators did not consider EBCE a permanent solution to these problems, but it provided them with just enough flexibility to buy time on RIFing or to retain some

teachers whom they were reluctant to release. Administrators also found EBCE useful for attracting federal and state categorical funds for drop-out prevention, gifted and talented programs, and the like, and some districts found that with modest alterations, the program was eligible for vocational education add-on funds--which often netted a profit after program costs.

Conclusion

Most of the reasons why EBCE, once installed, was so popular in school districts had little to do with basic skills or reform of student behavior or efforts to change the schools. EBCE responded to other pressing problems --student management, community relations, federal and state requirements to increase equity and educational quality, declining enrollment and funds --which couldn't be managed within the established institution. While EBCE had not been developed to solve these problems, or to solve them in the particular ways it did, its success in doing so could not fail to attract the support of many districts.

The story of EBCE illustrates two major themes in American education: reforming the structure and organization of secondary schooling with work, and trying to merge academic and experiential learning to improve achievement. Both have been pursued in a variety of ways by education reformers in this century, and neither has been achieved to much satisfaction. EBCE, like earlier reform programs, has produced little substantial change in high schools, their pedagogy and curriculum, or student behavior. Yet the program has been widely adopted and immensely popular. It enabled many community, staff, and student participants to satisfy a wide range of

personal and professional needs; but it also provided some evidence on the barriers to providing students with instructive and meaningful experiences through their exposure to work and community.

One observation derived from this school-and-work reform concerns the enormous role played by history and tradition in shaping the contemporary American high school and people's attitudes toward it. The present system of secondary education has deep roots in the past. Schools were developed in part to separate youth from the community: a protected environment staffed by experts was believe to provide the best possibility for preparing teen-agers for life in an increasingly complex world. The ideology of separation and protection had a considerable impact on the school organization. It gave rise to the constraints under which the school now operates; it promoted the belief that school was the chief agency responsible for youth and that youth belonged there; and it encouraged an elaborate body of legislation and regulation to ensure the school's mandate. Within this protected enclave, a complex array of formal and informal regulations developed, as did a strict definition of role and responsibility and a division of labor by task and function. All parties involved understood their contribution to the enterprise, but those parties did not include community people. Indeed, community involvement in schooling was specifically discouraged; the school became a remarkably self-sealed and self-perpetuating organization. The foundation upon which the school was built proved to be quite successful. Countless attempts at school reform were backed by the nearly universal conviction that youth belonged in school and that the school was best able to train and prepare youth for life outside.

The rise of EBCE and other work-and-school programs reflected a growing disenchantment with this ideology. Contemporary school critics decried the isolated, self-contained environment of schools and argued that the preparation of youth for life was too complex to be left to the schools alone. They called for lowering the barriers between school and community to enable working adults to participate in the training of youth for work. But the legacy of tradition could not be ignored. Letting youth out of school to experience work and working adults seemed sensible and desireble for many reasons; but the new ideology was thwarted by the old. Laws concerning compulsory attendance, diploma requirements, and the minimum age for school leaving still obtained; teacher certification and credentialing were the qualifications for instructing and grading student work; and the pervasive public belief that youth belongs in school remained. In addition to all this, the community businessmen who were to participate in this new form of education, while initially enthusiastic, found it difficult in practice to invest the necessary time and effort. As a result, the originally envisioned apprenticeships and experiences with serious, sustained work did not develop. In the implementation of the developed models we studied, most students watched rather than worked, or did work which differed little from work they might perform in after-school jobs.

In one sense, the response of community employers suggests that the new school-and-work ideas may have been doomed from the start, diluted not so much by the laws and traditions which had grown up around schools as by the community's lack of interest. But in another sense, these laws and traditions may have prevented a true test of the ideas. They presented a formidable barrier to effective non-school learning programs because

they hold school professionals ultimately responsible for students and their progress. Although in EBCE the content of required courses was frequently revised, as we have seen, the structure of the traditional curriculum was only modestly altered. Students still had to complete certain courses and units. And teachers focused most of their energies on student learning in subjects necessary for graduation, while learning from work experiences assumed a secondary role--just as it did for community employers. Neither teachers, who are responsible for academic achievement, nor employers, who are responsible for profits and production, considered teaching students about work as their central function. As a result, the work experience component of the program was only weakly developed, which in major ways altered the very nature and purpose of the program.

This is not to suggest that work was entirely lost in the program. If EBCE did not produce a wonderland of fruitful work experiences for students, it did add a formal curriculum about work to the schools' course offerings. Classes and seminars revolving around work, work attitudes, and work behavior were a feature of most programs, and students were exposed to such work-related tasks as completing job applications and participating in simulated job interviews. But in effect, the EBCE curriculum on work did not differ in form and process from courses in driver education or health and hygiene. It isolated the cognitive or informational aspects of work from experience and transmitted them through the traditional school pedagogy--lectures, discussions, and instructional aids such as films and books. Because this pedagogy falls within teachers' range of training, competence, and skill, it is not surprising that most of them felt more at ease with it. Traditional forms of instruction thus strongly influenced the shape which EBCE assumed in most schools.

There is a further point to be made concerning the conflict between the traditional purpose of schooling--protecting and insulating youth from the community--with the new concern about youth's estrangement from work and adults. The new prescription was a step in the direction of de-institutionalizing young people--letting them out of school for substantial parts of the day. But this proposal directly conflicted with traditional ideas about schooling, and school organization and structure, which impeded any drastic shift in direction. Regulations designed to ensure student attendance and a prescribed course of study toward diplomas pulled the program in the direction of a school-based curriculum--as did the responsibility of teachers for students' academic learning, and the ambivalence of many community residents toward youth out of school. This suggests that in various ways, secondary education in contemporary society is constrained if not trapped by the initial premises of schooling, so that structural reform becomes exceedingly difficult.

Many deviations from standard practice did occur. EBCE's collection under one umbrella of various recent and innovative teaching and learning practices--all imperfectly understood by most practitioners and difficult to implement--left much room for local and individual interpretation. In particular, involving the community in education--regardless of the nature and degree of its response--allowed administrators, staff, and students to interpret old rules in new ways, which many did to their personal and professional satisfaction. Some of the practices thus arrived at may endure: attendance and enrollment requirements that can be met even though students spend much time away from the school proper; or required history or English courses that can be completed using course content radically different

from the standard fare. In some instances, trial reinforced the old constraints: for example, in one school objections to the time staff spent away from school led to new rules governing their presence in school; and in another the poor quality of projects students submitted for credit led to quality control by non-program staff certified in the disciplines concerned. The departures from established practice that occurred most comfortably, however, and that appear most likely to endure, involved those elements of the program which were not entirely new. Letting many students out of school, redesigning the content of prescribed courses, and individualizing instruction, for example, have recently become familiar practices in most school districts; letting teachers out of school and permitting non-certified teachers to instruct and grade in required subjects have not. While many now expect such innovations in secondary education, during the early years of EBCE's implementation their time had not yet come. In these areas and others described in earlier chapters, EBCE was domesticated by the regulations and traditions of schools.

Yet while the inertia of the school is great, it is not absolute. Many practices now common in secondary schools were not in use several decades ago. Innovations, as they involve more and more students and teachers, begin to alter some aspects of the organization as it adapts to meet the new conditions. Innovative practices may be abandoned, and may even lead to additional regulations; but they leave their mark. Over time, they gradually unsettle people's attitudes toward existing arrangements, while introducing new arrangements at a pace which permits organizational and individual accommodation. EBCE has yet brought no major reforms to the schools; but it collected several contemporary new practices within one

program, pushed them into various school domains, and thus influenced populations of students, teachers, and administrators and their roles and activities.

This helps explain why EBCE was so eagerly embraced in many districts. Many welcomed the changes it proposed, which to varying degrees left them free to reinterpret the constraints and traditions of the school so as to obtain what they most wanted. Students were able to get the attention or instruction in school, or the freedom from school, they wanted; teachers were able to meet their responsibilities as they say fit; and administrators were able to deal with internal and external pressures on the schools. These various uses served to introduce additional new practices and activities into schools. Many of these may not persist, but many will, thus setting the stage for further incremental change in the organization and structure of the high school.

A second observation derived from the story of EBCE concerns the tension between academic and experiential education in American high schools, and our persistent efforts to resolve it. In this area as well, history helps to illuminate what happened in EBCE.

Since the early days of public education, the value of formal academic learning versus that which results from real experience has been debated. This discussion mirrored the nation's ambivalence about intellectual study and the common conviction that hard practical work is the main prerequisite for success in society. Many thought that rudimentary educational training was essential to preserve a democratic system of government, but also that too much education would undermine that system. It would recreate European inequalities by shunting power to the elite who had spent more time in

school. Yet people also believed in the value of academic learning: more education would not only serve the country well, but was an avenue to upward mobility and success.

The develooment of common schools which provided basic skills and moral instruction temporarily eclipsed these discussions. But they re-emerged with a new fervor in the late nineteenth century with the movement to extend public schooling to the secondary level. Once again, many questioned the value of academic instruction for the great majority of students who had neither the desire nor the capacity for it. They argued that a more practical education would better prepare most students for adult life and work, and pressed for the introduction of vocation-related training to the high school curriculum. Urging the same, others said that experiential learning and skills training would stimulate students who did not value academic study to learn basic skills, and perhaps to learn more from books.

In due course, job-related training became a standard part of the high school curriculum. And after vocational education had become established, other experiential learning programs were added; home economics and life adjustment further expanded the curriculum. The most recent arrival is career education, and the trend shows no signs of abating. Experiential learning programs have become a mainstay of the high school curriculum.

The introduction of experience to education has changed the high school curriculum. Much of the credit for this success is due to the work of John Dewey and other Progressive educators who laid the theoretical groundwork for the union of academic and experience-based learning. Their formulation of the use of real-life experience to stimulate cognitive

development and to motivate students to academic achievement provided an important rationale for school-based experiential learning programs. Their argument that such programs are not merely utilitarian but also encourage abstract thinking convinced many skeptics that experience, as a pedagogical tool, might succeed where traditional book-learning had failed. The Progressives thus legitimized the role of experience in education and elevated it from a merely trade-oriented, practical learning device to one with possibilities for intellectual development.

Whether these possibilities have been realized is a question which prompts much dispute. Since the early days of manual training and the Progressive movement, educators have been intrigued by ideas which propose to train the mind through the hand, and have developed many programs which claimed to do it. But the results are not impressive. Students exposed to new experiences or work do learn something. In the case of EBCE, particularly students who have never worked learn some things about the world of work. They also learn what is considered proper attire for different work settings, what information is requested on an employment application, and sometimes the salaries attached to different jobs. Some students learn to speak more comfortably with strange adults, others learn to use the local subway, and others still learn how to use the freedom provided by the program to do things they can't do within the traditional school. They learn many different things, ranging from job-related skills to specific information about work. But whether the experience promotes academic learning, or motivates students to achieve in the traditional academic domains of schooling, is not clear. Evidence that they do is not convincing. Improved

academic achievement seems instead to be due to such factors as individual instruction and more personal attention from teachers, rather than real work experience.

Many proponents of experiential learning disagree. They claim that cognitive development and improved school achievement do result from experience. They believe that it occurs in complex and convoluted ways which cannot be tracked and measured by the usual methods used in schools. In addition, they argue that experiential learning achieves greater success with many students and provides them with an education which is not qualitatively different from that which results from traditional methods. The proponents of traditional study advance equally compelling arguments to support the value of academic learning. In sum, they believe that where academic study failed, it failed because of inadequate resources, incompetent instruction, or inability to find methods which will work with all students. Many believe that, like Christianity, academic study often fails because it isn't tried.

Thus, advocates of both academic and experiential learning believe that their way is better. Both have arguments and evidence to support their positions, and both can offer explanations for why the evidence is sometimes ambiguous. And both are right. Academic study does not work for many students, and experiential learning does not seem to do any better. But each has been successful for many students; the question is how to tell what will succeed with whom.

In many respects, the inability of educators to answer that question has been the major impetus for the increasing diversification of the high school curriculum. As new courses and methods have been introduced to

both academic and experiential programs of study, a major lesson to be learned is that reform efforts meet the needs of some students but not those of others. This was clearly illuminated in the implementation of EBCE. The program presented an occasion for students to create, discover, and learn. But how and why students pay attention to some aspects of the program and not to others was and is beyond our ability to predict.

This may provide the best rationale for diversity in American secondary education. A wide range of choices for students, involving different content and methods within and across the academic and experiential curriculum, may be best. Some may take issue with those choices for good reasons, but good reasons do not alter individual preferences not do they necessarily produce constructive learning. Perhaps the most we can ask of schools is that they continue to diversify, thereby providing students with many possibilities to create, to discover, and to learn.

Notes to Chapter VII

1. Stix, S. and D.K. Cohen, The Implementation of EBCE: A Survey of Programs and Populations. Cambridge, MA: The Huron Institute, October 1978, p. 1.

2. DeSanctis, J.D., "Influences and Effects: The Implementation and Institutionalization of EBCE." Cambridge, MA: The Huron Institute, August 1980.

3. Stix, S. and D.K. Cohen, The Implementation of EBCE: A Survey of Programs and Populations. Cambridge, MA: The Huron Institute, October 1978, pp. 30-31.

4. Ibid., p. 8.

5. Ibid., p. 31.

6. Correspondence from National EBCE Association, March 1979.

APPENDIX A

THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodological approach employed by The Huron Institute in its implementation study of Experience-Based Career Education involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study included survey research on programs and communities adopting EBCE, and the data were either collected directly by The Huron Institute, or were collected by the National EBCE organization and passed on to Huron for analysis. The survey research also included extensive telephone interviews with EBCE programs around the country, and the results of this research can be found in this report as well (see Introduction, The Products of This Study). The methodological approach used for the collection and analysis of data for survey reports can be found in the individual reports.

For the most part, however, the methodology used by Huron in undertaking this study was qualitative and naturalistic, employing semi-structured interviews and observations. The field research was conducted by four staff members of the Institute; with the exception of two site visits during the four-year study, all of the field work was done by this small staff of people working in close collaboration.

The following discussion of the methodological approach to this study is concerned with the selection of sites for field research, the field research schedule over the course of four years, the conduct of the field research, and the recording and analysis of the data.

1. SITE SELECTION

The Huron Institute elected to use the best-case example in selecting

its sites for intensive field research. This decision rested on the view that EBCE was a secondary school reform of considerable complexity and would be difficult to implement under the best of circumstances. We concluded that given the limited amount of field research that could be undertaken, more could be learned by studying sites which had reportedly successful experiences with the program. Nominations for sites which seemed to be successful were solicited from the four developer labs and the National Institute of Education. On the basis of their recommendations and several other considerations, sites were selected for the first year of research, and others were tentatively selected for future study. The sites selected were equally spread across the four developer labs, in order to insure that there would be equal representation of their various interpretations of EBCE. Selection also included consideration of rural versus urban versus suburban locales, and of geographical region. Further, the selection procedure was designed to take full account of the variety of policy variables which were differentially applied across sites for EBCE implementation: training, technical assistance, federal funding, and strategies for dissemination through other organizations, notably SEAs. Variation in the kind and amount of assistance received by local districts is reflected in the following array of site categories included in this study.

A. Pilot Sites

Sites designated as pilot sites were those comparatively few which were the first to adopt and implement EBCE when the program was made available to local districts. The pilot sites received training, technical assistance, and materials from the developers in exchange for evaluation information across various dimensions of implementation activities. These sites receive

no direct federal subsidies. Their designation as pilot sites was a result of their work with the individual laboratories. Twelve pilot sites were included in The Huron Institute study.

B. VEA Part D Sites

The VEA Part D sites began implementation activities during the second year of the Huron study. Sites in 42 states received VEA grants of approximately $130,000 per year for three years. As a result of regional information meetings held by the OE offices to inform applicants about the four EBCE models, districts which applied selected one model to adopt, and as a rule worked with the developer lab in preparing a proposal. Once contracts were awarded, Part D sites purchased training and technical assistance services from the laboratories. While most VEA sites purchased some services, the kind and amount varied greatly, ranging from the complete T & TA lab package to virtually no lab services at all. The Huron Institute included 18 VEA Part D sites in its study. Once again, these sites were selected in order to include a representative spread of lab models, geographical regions, and district or program sizes. Selections were made with NIE and lab assistance.

C. Market Demand Sites

Market demand sites were those which chose to adopt and implement EBCE without official lab assistance or federal support. As a rule, however, most of these sites did receive some modest amount of assistance, and sometimes training, from the labs. Huron discovered during efforts to identify these sites that they were very elusive. Rumours abounded about where districts were implementing EBCE, where they were about to adopt, and so forth. And for the most part, the labs themselves had very sketchy information about

the range of market demand activity in the country, particularly as the study progressed and more districts became involved. Huron's work in this study dealt with five market demand sites.

D. State Strategy Sites

The NIE's State Strategy for disseminating EBCE was launched in the second year of The Huron Institute study. The notion behind this strategy was to develop within state education agencies the capability to disseminate EBCE to local districts. SEA staff were trained by the developers of the lab models, in order to maximize the opportunities for choice at the local level. During the first year of the NIE State Strategy, four states were funded by NIE for two years at approximately $100,000 per year. The following year, 13 additional states were included in NIE State Strategy. Those which became involved at this point did not receive federal support, but like those in the first phase, they received free training, technical assistance, and materials from the laboratories. The Huron Institute study included 17 states and a total of seven local districts in those states during the course of the study.

2. FIELD RESEARCH SCHEDULE

A. NIE and the Labs

The Huron Institute visited the NIE staff and the laboratories each year of the study. In particular, lab visits included conversations with all of the field staff in order to learn about events in the sites being studied, changes in the models as they were being implemented, changes in the training and materials being developed by the labs, and changes in the ideas and practices of the field staff. Most EBCE lab documents were reviewed, particularly

the successive generations of implementation materials. Evaluation reporting by the labs was reviewed as well.

B. Sites

Year I. Huron staff visited pilot and market demand sites for six to eight person-days each. In addition, we attended NIE conferences on work and school and met EBCE staff people there for formal interviews.

Year II. Huron visited VEA Part D sites, pilot sites, and market demand sites, half of which were revisits. One to four person-days were spent in the VEA Part D sites, depending on the amount of activity at the site (many of them were engaged in early start-up activities). Also during this year, Huron visited four states included in the NIE State Strategy and eight LEAs in those states, and attended meetings.

Year III. The study included revisits to pilot, market demand, and VEA Part D sites. These were revisits of approximately four person-days each. In addition, states involved in the State Strategy were studied, LEAs revisited, and meetings attended.

Year IV. Huron revisited VEA Part D sites for one to three person-days during this final year of field research. In addition, intensive telephone interviews were conducted with others, and with states implementing EBCE. Meetings of the EBCE national network were attended, and formal interviews were scheduled for that meeting.

3. CONDUCT OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

A. Document Review

All program materials relevant to EBCE in the districts were reviewed as made available. Student projects and reports, evaluation results, teacher

mode materials, PR brochures, and films were among them.

B. Interviews

The field research involved interviews and informal conversations with all local district staff involved with the program in that district. Others at the local level who were interviewed varied from site to site, since the interview schedule was arranged by local staff and did not always meet The Huron Institute's request. In virtually every district, however, we were able to meet with school district administrators and personnel who we had asked to meet. At the central office level, this included superintendents and district personnel in Career Education, Vocational Education, Secondary Education, Guidance and Counseling. At the school building level, interviews involved principals and assitant principals, the director of guidance and/or guidance counselors who referred students to EBCE. Selected teachers not formally involved with EBCE, representing various academic departments and special subject areas such as reading, art, and vocational education, were also formally interviewed. In addition, all EBCE staff in the program and most of the resource teachers utilized by the program were interviewed. Some of the conversations with school district administrators and staff were formal conversations, but a good many of them occurred quite informally at EBCE functions. Thus the interviews with EBCE staff took place not only over a period of four years in those sites which were included for that long in the study, but also under very different circumstances, ranging from formal to quite informal.

Students were heavily represented in the interviews conducted at each site. Huron requested a broad range of students to be interviewed, but found that school staff tended to choose those who were the most academically

or socially able. Efforts to influence the schools in this regard met with modest success. However, we did see many students who were not local "stars." Students were interviewed both formally and informally, such conversations occurring not only in schools, but also in coffeeshops, on rides to employer sites, and occasionally on tours through the school. Although not officially scheduled, a number of interviews were conducted with students who were not enrolled in EBCE.

Parents were also included in the field research for this study. They represented a range of socio-economic backgrounds, though our impression was that they were primarily middle- or working-class parents or parents of students who were successful in either school or the EBCE program, or both. Community employers and resource people were always visited at their work location. The interviews were usually formal and held in their offices, but occasionally they were spontaneous conversations conducted while the person was at work. The employers with whom we spoke represented a range of occupations and work sites. For the most part, however, we spoke with employers and workers in small businesses and public service agencies, including hospitals, schools, and the like. Few large business and industrial sites were included, primarily because school district staff seemed to find it difficult to arrange such interviews.

C. Observations

Observations of work occurred in schools, and a great deal of time was spent by Huron staff in the learning center, the hub of EBCE activity in each building. We observed EBCE classes and EBCE seminars, and occasionally were invited to observe EBCE teachers interacting with students in one-to-one conversations. Of course, we observed much informal interaction between EBCE

staff and students in all of the sites.

Observation of students at their employer sites occurred in all of the districts we visited. We observed what students were doing at the site and spoke with them and the employee with whom they worked while we were there. When students were engaged in classroom-like activities at the employer sites, Huron staff frequently sat in on these meetings for their duration.

4. RECORDING AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

A. Field Notes

All interviews and conversations, both formal and informal, were recorded in field notes. Notes were recorded by hand during conversations, and later dictated for transcription. The notes were discursive in form, and frequently wide-ranging. People and conversations were often quoted verbatim, and the notes became the field staff's personal observations on what was seen and said. An average interview of one hour produced field notes which, when transcribed, were about six to eight single-spaced typed pages long. In addition to recording interviews, field staff also dictated summary notes on site visits, and notes describing program and district context.

Following the transcription of field notes, field staff debriefing sessions were held with all other members of the field staff. Nearly half of the visits conducted during the course of this work were two-person visits, so that debriefing became an ongoing, in-the-field activity. Over the course of four years, the study produced several thousand pages of transcribed notes.

B. Data Analysis

The analysis of the field work data began with the staff's recording

of field notes. Observations and analyses of what was said and its relation to other events and activities were recorded in the notes. A formal analysis of each year's field research was conducted at the end of each field research year. Following the second year of field work, the field staff formally prepared a carefully detailed outline of the research issues to guide a systematic analysis of the data. Each member of the field staff then reviewed his/her own field notes, and coded all the data that were in any way relevant to these detailed issues. This activity occurred after year three and four of the research as well.

In deciding which quotations and other field note data to include as examples and which to exclude, Huron staff was painstaking in its effort to ensure that the choice was representative. Although the field notes necessarily concerned individuals in their own context, all of the data were discussed by Huron staff in order to reach agreement on examples that were not extreme, but represented what was possible and plausible at other sites.